

# CINEFANTASIQUE

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## 007 JAMES BOND

PIERCE BROSNAN

THE WORLD IS  
NOT ENOUGH

SEAN CONNERY

GEORGE LAZENBY

TIM BURTON'S  
SLEEPY HOLLOW

STEPHEN KING'S  
THE GREEN MILE

SCHWARZENEGGER'S  
END OF DAYS

Volume 31 Number 9



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Dracula's Castle  
Boris Karloff's Witch Mansion

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"The Magazine with a Sense of Wonder"

DECEMBER 1999

Welcome to our cover story on **THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH**, the latest entry in the James Bond saga which opens nationwide from MGM/UA November 19. This is our third cover story on the Pierce Brosnan Bonds, following **GOLDENEYE** and **TOMORROW NEVER DIES**, and from our preview, it looks to be shaping up as his best effort yet, ably propelling agent 007 into the 21st century.

London correspondent Alan Jones reports from the set at Pinewood Studios, Bond's traditional home base which bears a sound stage named in his honor—007. Pierce Brosnan talks about assuming a greater guiding hand in shaping the series, and becoming more assured in the secret agent role. Also interviewed are director Michael Apted (**COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER**), selected by Brosnan to better the dramatic quotient, producer Michael G. Wilson, the steward of the Eon Productions Bond movie empire, and Robert Carlyle, the distinctive Scottish star of both **TRAINSPOTTING** and **THE FULL MONTY**, on bringing a new panache to Bond villainy.

In companion pieces exploring the history of Bond, David Giammarco provides delightful interviews with original Bond Sean Connery on rumors he might reappear in the series, and Desmond Llewelyn on his role as Bond gadget-master Q, rating every 007 from Connery to Brosnan. Bond expert Rich Handley looks at the 007 novels and talks to one-time Bond star George Lazenby.

And in this Halloween season, there's horror, besides Bond, to look forward to. Also from London, Alan Jones provides an on-the-set report of the making of Tim Burton's **SLEEPY HOLLOW**. Douglas Eby looks at the re-make of William Castle's **HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL**, and offers a preview of the December opening of Stephen King's **THE GREEN MILE**. Dan Scapperotti looks at the continuation of a video horror franchise, **CHILDREN OF THE CORN 666**. And Dennis Fischer interviews low-budget independent auteur Richard Elfman on his stylish **MODERN VAMPIRES**. On the heels of the surprising success of **THE SIXTH SENSE**, horror is hot again!



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# HOLLYWOOD GOTHIC

## IN PRODUCTION

### BATTLEFIELD EARTH

Card-carrying Scientologist John Travolta, working as producer and star, brings author L. Ron Hubbard's epic tome to the screen. Forrest Whitaker co-stars for director Roger Christian, working from an adaptation by Cory Mandel.

### DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Joel Silver (PREDATOR) exec produces this film based on the popular role-playing game, which is shooting in Prague. Courtney Solomon directs from a script by Topper Lilien. Justin Whalin, Jeremy Irons, and Bruce Payne star.

### FLAT DOG

Director Tobe Hooper seeks to revive his waning career with this independent horror effort starring Mark McLaughlin, with a script by Michael Weiss.

### THE FLINTSTONES: VIVA ROCK VEGAS

Universal sequelizes its blockbuster hit, with an almost all-new cast: Mark Addy, Stephen Baldwin, Kristen Johnston, and Joan Collins (Harvey Corman is returning, and this time you'll see him). Brian Levant directs from a script by Harry Eifont, Deborah Kaplan, Jacks Epps Jr., and Jim Cash.

### GALAXY QUEST

Tim Allen, Sigourney Weaver, and Alan Rickman star in this science-fiction comedy from DreamWorks pictures. Robert Gordon and David Howard wrote the script; Dean Parisot directs.

### MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 2

After weeks of delay, this film finally got started in Australia, scuttling its originally intended year-end release. Tom Cruise returns as producer and star, supported by the returning Ving Rhames. John Woo directs, from a script worked over by Cruise-favorite Robert Towne, along with David Marconi, William Goldman, and Michael Tolkin.

### MISSION TO MARS

Brian DePalma (replacing Harold Ramis, who left during development) directs Gary Sinise and Tim Robbins in this science-fiction effort that is billing itself as an "action-drama."

### SPACE COWBOYS

Clint Eastwood directs this adventure, written by Ken Kaufman and Howard Klausner, about aging astronauts called out of retirement to handle an emergency mission requiring their years of experience. Eastwood heads the ensemble cast which includes Donald Sutherland (who worked with him decades ago on KELLY'S HEROES), Tommy Lee Jones, James Garner, James Cromwell, William Devane, Marcia Gay Harden, and Courtney B. Vance.

## NEWS AND NOTES

The art-house effort THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT, which became a crossover hit thanks to a brilliant marketing campaign and some ridiculously overstated praise in the press, is now likely to spawn a franchise for its distributor, Artisan Films. Writer-directors Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez have plans for four—count 'em, four—follow-ups: two prequels and two sequels. The prequels would deal with the original Blair Witch legend and with the serial killer mentioned in the first film; the first sequel would concern the search for the missing filmmakers, and the second sequel idea is being kept

under wraps. (Maybe they should do one revealing that the characters in BLAIR WITCH didn't really die but faked the whole thing as a hoax in order to get attention from a gullible media.)

THE X-MEN is scheduled to film in Canada for 20th Century Fox. Bryan Singer (THE USUAL SUSPECTS) will direct, from a script by Ed Solomon and Christopher McQuarrie. Ian McKellen and Patrick Stewart star.

New Zealand horror maestro Peter Jackson is prepping his live-action version of LORD OF THE RINGS for Miramax's genre division, Dimension Films. Jackson co-wrote the script with his wife and frequent collaborator, Fran Walsh. Elijah Wood and Sean Astin are set to star. New Line Cinema will hand U.S. distribution.

Bridget Fonda and Albert Finney are planning to star in DELIVERING MILO for director Nick Castle. Wim Wenders is executive producing the moderately budgeted independent feature film, which is about a young boy in heaven who wants to be born on Earth.

Val Kilmer and Terence Stamp are signed up to star in MARS, a science-fiction epic that will film in Iceland and Australia for Village

Roadshow Pictures; Warner Brothers will hand domestic distribution.

After announcing the start of filming earlier this year, Dimension's SCREAM IF YOU KNOW WHAT I DID LAST HALLOWEEN did an abrupt about face back into

pre-production—where it supposedly remained until late summer, making the official release date seem unlikely. Maybe Dimension realized they didn't want their SCREAM parody coming out before their SCREAM sequel?

GODZILLA 2000 (formerly GODZILLA MILLENNIUM) completed filming in Tokyo last summer for a Japanese theatrical release in December. It was directed by Takao Okawara, who did

two of the best new wave Godzilla pics GODZILLA VS. MECHA GODZILLA and GODZILLA VS. DESTROYER). Like GODZILLA 1985, the film is a direct sequel of the original GODZILLA, ignoring all the intervening sequels. Borrowing a bit from QUATERMAS AND THE PIT, Godzilla fights an ancient but far from inert alien spaceship that's been buried for millennia on Earth. Sony Pictures, which own the U.S. distribution rights, will probably send the film straight to video, approximately six months after its overseas debut.

Victor Mature, the star of the original version of ONE MILLION B.C., died in August of cancer, at the age of 86. (The dino-epic, which featured optically enlarged lizards, was later remade with Ray Harryhausen stop-motion effects.) Mature appeared in numerous other films, including SAMSON AND DELILAH and THE ROBE.

Despite all the hype and predictions, STAR WARS: THE PHANTOM MENACE fell well short of surpassing the record-setting box office of TITANIC, either in the U.S. or worldwide. Still, with a domestic take of over \$400-million, it is one of the most successful films of all time. **Steve Biodrowski**



Mark Addy and Kristen Johnston in THE FLINTSTONES IN VIVA ROCK VEGAS, for Summer 2000.

## NEW RELEASES

### BATS Oct 22

Destination Films. With: Lou Diamond Phillips and Dina Meyer.

This horror opus takes a shot at cashing in on the recent revival in the genre's box office fortunes. Page 28.

### END OF DAYS Nov 19

Universal. With: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Robin Tunney.

Peter Hyams directs this apocalyptic extravaganza that tells of the Devil's return to Earth. Page 12.

### THE GREEN MILE Dec 17

Warner Bros. With: Tom Hanks.

Writer-director Frank Darabont (THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION) tries his hand at a second Stephen King adaptation. Page 6.

### HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL Oct 29

Warner Bros. With: Geoffrey Rush.

Joel Silver and Robert Zemeckis remake the Vincent Price camp classic. Page 8.

### JOAN OF ARC Nov 5

Sony Pictures. With: Milla Jovovich, John Malkovich, Faye Dunaway.

Luc Besson directs this film of the French warriorress who said voices from heaven inspired her triumph over British invaders.

### POKEMON Nov 12

Warner Bros. With: Pikachu and pals.

The cute anime characters reach the big screen.

### SCREAM 3 Dec 10

Dimension-Miramax. With: David Arquette, Neve Campbell, Courtney Cox.

Kevin Williamson and Wes Craven carve out a third chapter in the self-referential slasher series.

### SLEEPY HOLLOW Nov 19

Warner Bros. With: Johnny Depp, Christina Ricci, Casper Van Dien.

Tim Burton directs from a screenplay by Andrew Kevin Walker, based on the short story by Washington Irving. Page 16.

### STUART LITTLE Dec 10

Sony Pictures. With: Geena Davis, Michael J. Fox, Gene Wilder.

A talking mouse is born to a human family. Page 14.

### TOY STORY 2 Nov 26

Disney. With: Tom Hanks, Tim Allen.

After beginning life as a direct-to-video project, the sequel to the CGI-animated hit finds its way to theatres. Page 30.

### THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH Nov 19

MGM-UA. With: Pierce Brosnan, Denise Richards.

The bi-annual Bond franchise returns. Page 32.

# Controversy Dogs "Dogma"

**Kevin Smith acts and directs Ben Affleck as fallen angel, offending Bible thumpers.**

By Russell Lissau

Filmmaker Kevin Smith's new picture, *DOGMA*, is quite a departure for the award-winning champion of the indie film scene. Not only is the movie Smith's first foray into science fiction/fantasy, but it's also his first picture with a truly star-studded cast, including Alan Rickman, Linda Fiorentino, Salma Hayek, Chris Rock and Hollywood's favorite buddy duo, Ben Affleck and Matt Damon. Not bad for a former New Jersey convenience store clerk who made his first flick, *CLERKS*, just five years ago for a measly \$27,575 and had to use his friends as actors.

But the biggest thing that separates *DOGMA* from Smith's past projects (*CLERKS*, *MALLRATS* and *CHASING AMY*) is the grief he's been getting because of it. Whereas *CLERKS* and *CHASING AMY* earned the 29-year-old Smith accolades aplenty, including prizes at the Cannes and Sundance film festivals, *DOGMA* has brought a seemingly endless stream of controversy. Ever since copies of the screenplay for the religious satire first crept across the Internet, a zealous group called the Catholic League For Religious and Civil Rights has been protesting the movie, which is due out from Lion's Gate in November. That's primarily because *DOGMA* is about two fallen angels (Affleck and Damon) who try to sneak back into Heaven through a religious loophole, and the self-proclaimed moralists aren't too happy with the film's depiction of the Catholic church and its icons. The complaints were so loud that Miramax Films, which is owned by The Walt Disney Co., dropped *DOGMA* from its distribution schedule, selling the film to producers Bob and Harvey Weinstein for a reported \$10 to \$14 million.



Smith directs Affleck in *CHASING AMY*. Lion's Gate opens his controversial religious fantasy November 12 after Miramax was pressured to drop it.

The irony of it all is that Smith is a practicing Catholic and an all-around spiritual person. Not only that, he says *DOGMA* isn't the blasphemous picture its detractors are making it out to be. Far from it.

"It's actually a really reverent movie," insisted the young writer-director. "It's a very pro-faith, pro-Catholic movie, and it's gotten a bum rap by a lot of people who haven't seen it. If you go into the movie expecting a controversial, in-your-face film, regarding religion or Catholicism, you're going to be sorely disappointed."

An early trailer for *DOGMA* highlighted some of the more fantastical elements of the film, such as Affleck and Damon strolling around with angel's wings, another heavenly emissary walking on water and a monster made of excrement. With a budget rumored to be between \$6 and \$8 million, *DOGMA* is no financial *PHANTOM MENACE* or *TITANIC*, but it's definitely not a low-budget sleeper like *CLERKS*. The sci-fi elements in the story set it apart from Smith's other films, too. "It plays with supernatural characters," he says. "It's a big leap away from the other movies."

Controversy aside, *DOGMA* has given Smith a chance to broaden his acting skills a bit. In each of his films, he's played a bit part as the aptly named Silent Bob, an overcoat-wearing, *STAR WARS*-worshipping slacker who hangs out with a foul-mouthed dope dealer named Jay (played by Smith's longtime friend, Jason Mewes). In *DOGMA*, Silent Bob and Jay move from goofy comic relief to stars, stepping into the spotlight as the picture's heroes. They're actually enlisted by the forces of Good to stop Affleck and Damon, for if the renegade angels succeed in returning to heaven, all existence

will be torn asunder. Smith said he enjoyed having a larger role this time around. "It's great," he says. "It's funny and fresh, and we get to do things we've never done before."

Although the New Jersey native wears many hats as a filmmaker, the cap that says "actor" across the crown is one he's had a difficult time getting used to. "Someone referred to me at Cannes as an actor, and I was really taken aback by that," he said. "But I guess I am."

Acting has definitely had its perks for Smith. His short but memorable turns as Silent Bob have resulted in, of all things, an action figure. The bearded and admittedly out-of-shape Smith chuckled when he talked about kids playing with miniature plastic versions of himself. "I look at that figure and I go, 'Wow!' I'm the fattest action figure there is. I'm an inaction figure." Still, he gets a kick out of the fact that he's been rendered in plastic. "It's pretty funky. It's a little kooky. But you can't beat it. It'll be even cooler to give it to my daughter. She'll ask, 'Daddy, what's this?' and I'll say, 'Your daddy used to be famous before he worked at the grocery store.'" □

# STEPHEN KING'S THE GREEN MILE

**An on-the-set preview, filming King's supernatural thriller, starring Tom Hanks.**

*By Douglas Eby*

In the intro to his *New York Times* bestselling novel *The Green Mile*, Stephen King wrote about his interest in the subject of the death penalty, and the prison system that carries it out: "I had been playing with a story idea on a subject I had always suspected I would get around to sooner or later: the electric chair. 'Old Sparky' has fascinated me ever since my first James Cagney movie, and the first Death Row tales I ever read (in a book called *Twenty Thousand Years in Sing Sing*, written by Warden Lewis E. Lawes) fired the darker side of my imagination. What, I wondered, would it be like to walk those last 40 yards to the electric chair, knowing you were going to die there? What, for that matter, would it be like to be the man who had to strap the condemned man in...or pull the switch? What would such a job take out of you? Even creepier, what might it add?"

King's resulting story was first published in six small monthly books (like Dickens had done, King points out), and won a 1997 Bram Stoker Award for Best Novel. The story of a Southern death row in 1932 is narrated by retired prison guard Paul Edgecombe (played in the film by Tom Hanks) who is confined to a nursing home. Main characters include sadistic guard Percy Westmore (Doug Hutchison); homicidal maniac Billy the Kid (Sam Rockwell); a



Screenwriter/director Frank Darabont, who adapted King's *THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION*, rehearses Hanks and Harry Dean Stanton on the prison set.

giant inmate convicted of child murders, John Coffey (Michael Clarke Duncan), who also has healing powers, and warden Hal Moores (James Cromwell, in a role much closer to his L.A. CONFIDENTIAL one than to *BABE*). Castle Rock Entertainment opens director Frank Darabont's adaptation of King's book nationwide December 17.

As at least one reviewer of the novel declared, King has clearly taken a position of opposing capital punishment, and his detailed description of one of the central scenes, an execution in the chair, is brutally horrific. But part of what made the story appeal to director Frank Darabont and the acclaimed cast may be the richness of all these characters, and the story's theme that such an extreme environment forges character and,

for better or worse, changes people's "level of humanity," as Darabont put it.

After being reinstated in 1976, having been declared "cruel and unusual punishment" for a time, there are now perhaps about 2,000 people on death row in various states. Florida is one of six states that uses electrocution, and in March, 1998, Judy Buenoano was executed in a Florida electric chair. She had been dubbed the "Black Widow" for killing her handicapped 19-year-old son by pushing him out of a canoe, feeding her husband arsenic until he died, and trying to kill her lover by putting dynamite in the trunk of his car. A newswire report of her execution noted the state's 75-year-old electric chair was nicknamed "Old Sparky" after

flames leaped from the head of inmate Pedro Medina during his March 1997 execution, but the name has probably been around a long time.

The device has an interesting history: in 1881 a man saw an elderly drunkard touch the terminals of an electrical generator in Buffalo, New York, and he was "amazed at how quickly and apparently painlessly the man is killed" and described the episode to a senator friend of his. In 1887, Thomas Edison conducted demonstrations in New Jersey in which he killed large numbers of cats and dogs by luring the animals onto a metal plate wired to a 1000-volt AC generator. In 1889, the world's first Electrical Execution Law went into effect, and in 1890, Edwin R. Davis, a prison electrician, designed an electric chair, with tests involving large slabs of meat, followed by the first human electrocution, of an axe murderer from Buffalo, New York (which was then known as the "Electric City of the Future"). The first application of current was ineffective and the prisoner did not die until the second one. A New York newspaper reported about execution witnesses: "Strong men fainted and fell like logs on the floor."

In *THE GREEN MILE*, "Old Sparky" was built as an authentic depiction of a 1930s era electric chair, and is, in a sense, the central focus of much of the story. Book four of King's serialized novel was titled "The



**“You can’t continue to execute as many people who are being executed today in Texas,” said actor James Cromwell, “and have any sense that it’s effective as a deterrent.”**”

Tom Hanks as prison guard Paul Edgecombe in King’s screed against the horrors of capital punishment, which Castle Rock releases on December 17.

Bad Death of Delacroix” and refers to the horrific execution of “Del” (Michael Jeter) in that chair. The KNB EFX Group created an animatronic of Delacroix getting electrocuted, based on extensive research on what really goes on in such a gruesome execution. “We took some liberties, because you want to make it cinematic, but we researched executions from the ’30s, which are very different than today,” noted Howard Berger of the effects company. “We found a lot of footage that Thomas Edison shot of electrocutions. He filmed people and also an elephant getting electrocuted. It’s pretty intense. There’s a tremendous amount of damage to people.” Their puppet was carefully constructed to withstand multiple takes with a lot of flailing of the limbs, plus fire and burning. The execution scene reportedly took a week to shoot, and includes very atmospheric lightning effects that di-

rector Darabont said help push it into a “fairy tale” sort of image.

But the execution of Delacroix, Cromwell noted, was particularly “revolting, foul, cruel, inhumane and absolutely ghastly to watch” and depicted very effectively thanks to the KNB effects animatronic. Part of what made this particular death so violently ghastly—“Delacroix is basically cooked from the inside out,” Cromwell noted—is that the salt water sponge, that is supposed to be placed between the metal execution cap and the prisoner’s scalp to make the current flow effectively into the body, was purposely left out by guard Percy Westmore (Doug Hutchison). This in turn inspires the warden to vent a lot of anger on Percy: “Doug’s character has just allowed a man to die the most excruciating death,” Cromwell said, “mainly out of his own sadism, and this ob-

scene interest he has in inflicting pain, because he’s determined that Del is a homosexual. I’ve watched this, and I come down to confront them as to what the hell happened [to make it so brutal], and find out he’s on purpose left the sponge out. He’s kind of, ‘Oh, gee, I didn’t think it was going to be so bad. I didn’t know.’ And of course, I am absolutely pissed, and what I say to him is, ‘I can’t stand your guts, and if you tell anybody’—because he has connections right up to the governor, and can get you fired just by making a telephone call—I say, ‘You try to call any of your candy-ass friends, and I’ll have these guards here break your frigging arms.’”

Louisiana in the 1930s was under the rule of a particularly autocratic governor, Huey Long, and the need to stay in good graces with him had to affect the way guards participated in the prison system, and chose to follow their personal ethics. Cromwell noted he believes that the warden [Moore] is fair, “and he’s a caring man, and runs the prison the best he can under the despicable conditions. You go down to Louisiana and look at these Victorian prisons, and the state of dilapidation—it’s the old style 1930s prison film for real. You’re throwing together, so often, the innocent with the guilty, the depraved with the sane, and it’s a frigging madhouse, and to keep it at all human and just functioning is a challenge, and I think he does incredibly well.”

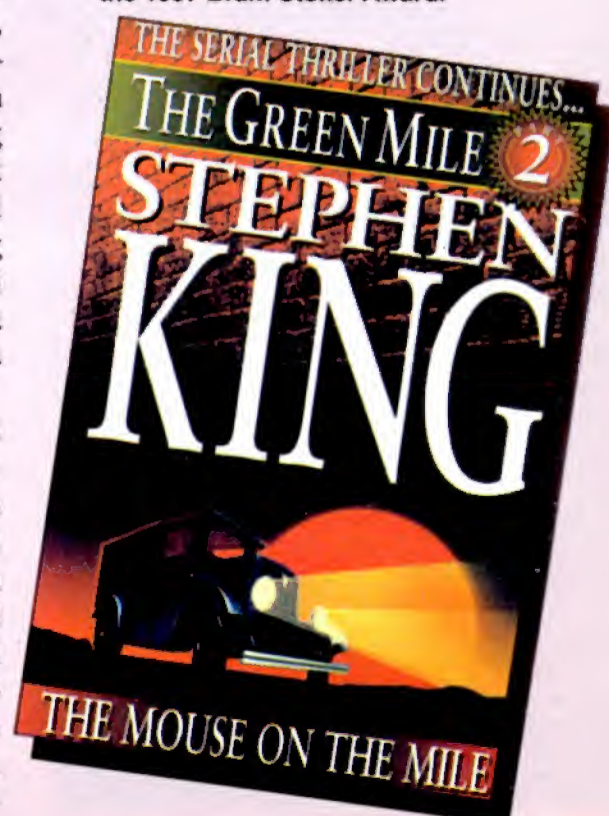
Cromwell commented that the prison was a horrible environment and “the worst job you can possibly do. My personal belief is that no one involved in that process, who has any kind of sense, is for the process. I don’t think you can continue to execute as many people who are being executed today in Texas, and have any sense that it’s ef-

fective as a deterrent. But on the other hand, you can’t be in a position like [the warden] is and continue to hold the position without going along with it.”

Patricia Clarkson (who plays the deathly ill warden’s wife, Melinda, who benefits from Coffey’s healing powers) pointed out that the topic of criminal justice and what society does about criminals so often comes up in news stories. “Our prison systems have got to change,” she said. “I don’t believe in the death penalty, I never have. And I feel the same still, after this film. I don’t believe killing someone ever made anything better, and I find it astonishing that we have given power to the government to take life. I don’t think it’s a deterrent. I don’t think it does anything. One innocent man killed is not worth it. And even a guilty man. I just don’t think we can solve the ills of this world with death. It doesn’t make any sense.”

But, added Clarkson, working on *THE GREEN MILE* was “one of those rare, beautiful experiences all around.” □

Originally published in six paperback installments, King’s best-seller won the 1997 Bram Stoker Award.



# HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL

**Remaking the camp '50s William Castle horror romp for the MTV generation.**

*By Douglas Eby*

The original William Castle film *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL* was presented in many theatres in 1958 with a flying skeleton gimmick called "Emergo"—a kind of marketing touch with a pulp sensibility appreciated by director Bill Malone, who shot for Dark Castle Entertainment, a new film company created "in as-



Oscar-winner Geoffrey Rush takes the Vincent Price role as demented millionaire Frederick Loren. Inset: Director Bill Malone rehearsing Rush.



sociation with the spirit of the late William Castle," as a press announcement put it. Founders Joel Silver and Robert Zemeckis are producing this first effort, along with Gilbert Adler, a previous *TALES FROM THE CRYPT* partner of theirs.

The original film, at least to '90s audiences, has a camp tone, with lines such as Vincent Price as Frederick Loren: "Don't let the ghosts and the ghouls disturb you, love;" and Carol Ohmart as Annabelle Loren: "Darling, the

only ghoul in the house is you!"

Malone was a fan of Castle's, and had seen the original when he was a kid, plus a number of times since on video. "What I really wanted to do was retain the flavor of it, and bring it into a modern context," he said. "Hopefully, that's what we've done. People who have seen the footage so far say it's an interesting amalgam of the 1930's, a classic film, and yet it's very contemporary at the same time. I have a great interest in the old

'30s pulp magazines, *Horror Story*, *Terror Tales* and all that stuff, and I really wanted to lend that quality to this movie. And it's really got a lot of that."

One of the changes Malone made in the story was the setting: "It was my notion to not make it a house, per se, but to make it a former mental institution, turned into a house. And all that had happened back in the '30s, so there's a lot of sort of '30s pulp stuff."

The new film stars Academy

Award winner Geoffrey Rush in the Vincent Price role of Frederick Loren, and Famke Janssen as his wife Annabelle, plus Taye Diggs, Ali Larter, Peter Gallagher, Bridgette Wilson and *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE* comedian Chris Kattan. In addition to its strong cast and director, the film is benefiting from the enthusiastic input as co-producer of Terry Castle, William's daughter. Growing up, she was part of her father's life as a filmmaker: "You couldn't be in our family and not be actively involved." She noted her birth came at about the time of the release of *HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL*, so she wasn't exactly around for its making, but "This film in particular stood out in my mind."

A few years ago Castle got the idea for a remake and a friend, *FORREST GUMP* producer Wendy Finerman knew about Zemeckis' appreciation of her dad's work: "She sent me an article he had written in *Film Comment* about my father. And it was just really flattering. John Waters has also been a huge fan of Dad's, and has been so wonderful to my family, and in promoting Dad still. 'William Castle's God,' he's said. It was so cute. So I got to thinking, 'Let's remake this.' I tracked down the rights to Warner Bros., and wrote a letter to them, and I met with the then head of production, Bruce Berman. He said, 'You know, Terry, I don't really need to





The original 1958 film, produced and directed with tongue-in-cheek by horror specialist William Castle, has become a Halloween staple on TV re-runs.

talk to you. We don't need to discuss anything here, you've got a deal. We're going to make this movie.' I said, 'Great. That was easy!'" she added, with a laugh. "So I went to meet with Joel that day, and he said, 'I met your father. He talked to me when I first moved to L.A. And Zemeckis loves your dad.' It was so cool."

Dark Castle Entertainment co-founder Joel Silver called-in Bill Malone to develop the film. Malone worked on the script for a year-and-a-half with Dick Beebe, who wrote an episode of Silver's TALES FROM THE CRYPT series which Malone had directed. As inspiration for his take on the remake, Malone cited the 1985 Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi 'THE BLACK CAT, as well as the work of H. P. Lovecraft.

"What I liked particularly about H.P. Lovecraft was his

sense of creeping dread, and that's what I want this movie to have. This is not really a gory movie; it's got some gore, but it's really not about that. I think gore is cheap. What I really want to do is get the sense that you're in a bad place and bad things are going to happen, that kind of goosebumps thing, and the hackles on the back of your neck stand up. Hopefully, that's what we've created."

As Eddie, one of the guests offered \$1 million to spend a night in the house "with a hideous past," Taye Diggs (HOW STELLA GOT HER GROOVE BACK) noted he was interested in doing the film because he had never done this kind of genre project before: "Geoffrey Rush legitimized it, so I signed on," said Diggs.

Diggs and other cast members watched a video of the earlier

#### DIRECTOR BILL MALONE

**"I really want to get the sense that you're in a bad place and bad things are going to happen, that kind of goosebumps thing, and the hackles on the back of your neck stand up."**

1958 version. "We laughed at the campiness of a lot of it, but at the same time, some of it is really kind of frightening," he said. "The crude way some of the effects were shown ended up being more spooky. Like the way people were floating, on wheels." Diggs noted that his character Eddie, and the others, were strangers brought together for the first time in the house: "Me and the other young person, Ali Larter, become partners, because we have the most in common. And then we end up, for all intents and purposes, saving the day."

HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL is only Larter's third film. "I'm learning by the second," said Larter, who went on to film the fantasy FLIGHT 180 in Vancouver, directed by THE X-FILE's James Wong. "I'm going to walk away from this film being much more technically prepared to walk into my next picture. Watching the other actors, watching Geoffrey [Rush] work, has been an incredible experience. And Taye [Diggs] is great. What a gentleman. He's been my savior on this movie. The set is dark and dirty, and everyone's been sick, and he and Chris [Kattan] keep me laughing. We really have had a good time."

Larter has not been in the kind of life-threatening situation of the story, and noted, "it's kind of hard in the acting sense, because your brain is saying 'this is impossible' and it's really hard to logically explain the situations that occur in the house. So I'm just hoping that everyone buys it, buys my choices." Sarah and Eddie [Taye Diggs] connect with each other and form a protective bond: "Everyone else is so out there, and in their own world, and hard to trust," Larter noted.

Diggs has commented in other interviews about being shy, like many actors, and that performing has been beneficial: "I've been acting for as long as I've been shy," he said. "I wouldn't say that

my insecurities and my shyness has lessened just because of expressing myself through acting, but I think what has a role in my becoming more confident is the kind of false sense of adoration that you get from 'the business.' Everyone in the business is always telling you how great you are. Then you have the right to walk around Hollywood with your chin up and your chest out. For the average cat, that might have a bad effect, but for me, because I was so insecure, it gives me a reason to be a little more confident."

Diggs admitted "there's really not much" to his character in this film. "It's more the situation that the character is in. He's an ex-baseball player. The story doesn't pay that much attention to character growth. I'm the manpower of the group."

Diggs said he appreciated the role in terms of developing his imagination: "We're put in so many situations—like this next

Updating the shocks: Warner Bros. opens the Dark Castle production nationwide October 22 for Halloween.





Malone cited the works of H. P. Lovecraft as an influence on the film, produced by TALES FROM THE CRYPT partners Joel Silver and Robert Zemeckis.

scene we're shooting, we're running down a hallway and one of the members of the party gets sucked up and disintegrated by this black mass of evil. And when we shoot that, I have nothing to look at, so I have to make it up in my head, and react to what I think this might possibly look like. And Bill [the director] is shouting over his megaphone: 'This nasty thing is coming at your face, it's about to eat you up. Scream, scream, scream.' And we just have to pretend."

Adler, a partner in Dark Castle with Silver and Zemeckis, had produced the TALES FROM THE CRYPT series and two CRYPT features for them. The idea for a HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL remake had been brewing for some time. "Joel, Bob and I talked about it about two years ago, originally, and we got busy with other projects, and then got back together a little over a year ago, and started talking about it seriously to Warner Bros. Concurrently, and unbeknownst to us, Terry [Castle] came over and asked Warner Bros. about doing it, and she met with Joel, and he said, 'Great; let's do it.'"

Adler said it "felt like the right thing to do" to make this specific film the premier for Dark Castle.

Castle was an influential figure for Adler: "As a kid, I loved his movies," he said. "I got such a kick out of them. And I always felt the market-

ing for them was so clever. He always had some kind of gag, something other than just the movie, like, 'I'll sell you an insurance policy from Lloyds of London for a million dollars, if we scare you to death.'"

Adler noted the style of the remake is "totally different" than the Vincent Price original. "The only thing that's similar, I think, is the spirit of the piece," he said, "of how we're telling the story, and the basic tenets of the story itself. We contemporize it as much as possible. Instead of being a typical sort of haunted house, this is much more modern, with a touch of Deco. It's not what you'd expect to see. We used the exterior of the Griffith Observatory, with, in some cases, miniatures, and in some cases, matte paintings. The setting is present day, but the house of the story existed in 1931."

Rush passes out handguns as coffin party favors to guests Famke Janssen, All Larter, Taye Diggs and Peter Gallagher, a scene straight from the William Castle original.



#### CO-PRODUCER TERRY CASTLE

**"My poor father. He'd come home and my mother just did not get his films at all. She'd say, 'That one was a piece of crap, honey.' She kept everything in perspective."**

HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL is Malone's first feature film in a long time. "I did one year ago, a sort of ALIEN rip-off, with drooling monsters, called CREATURE [1985], and before that a little micro-budget movie [SCARED TO DEATH, 1982]." Malone noted he loves the genre, "I have a great collection of props from what I consider the golden age of horror and sci-fi. I own Robbie The Robot, the original from the movie." He very much wants to continue feature film directing, and has found television "not very rewarding. In that area, I'm sort of a misfit anyway. I tend to put too much of a personal stamp on things, which in television, they don't really want you doing. I've done some shows where they'll never ask me back again, and rightfully so," he said, laughing. "This [feature film directing] is a much better situation. You can sort of pull out all the stops."

Contrasting his experience as a feature director versus television, Malone finds he gets more time with a movie to rehearse with the actors. "I did a TV show called DARK JUSTICE which was an hour show shot in four and a half days. You roll the camera and if the actor gets anywhere near what's in the script, you take it. And of course, you don't want to do that stuff; it's not conducive

to doing good work."

In addition to directing, Malone writes screenplays: "I write out of self-defense," he said. "I wrote SUPERNOVA [opening in January for MGM] and UNIVERSAL SOLDIER PART II. There's stuff I feel very inspired by, things I'd like to both write and direct, but at the same time, I think there's a certain freedom in directing somebody else's script, too, because you can see it with a distant eye."

As far as the script for HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL, Malone said he wrote "about 20% of it, although I'm not taking any screenplay credit. And I wrote half of the story, and a lot of the inventions are mine. At the same time, I don't want to take anything away from Dick [Beebe]. He did some absolutely brilliant stuff. It was a real collaborative effort."

Castle is delighted with Malone's take on the remake. She estimates she's seen the original "about a thousand times" and it is among several of her dad's films that particularly caught her interest, but not her mom's: "My poor father. He'd come home, and my mother just did not get his films at all. She'd say, 'That one was a piece of crap, honey.' She kept everything in perspective, you know. But there were a few of his films that really stuck out in my mind, and this one in particular, because of the relationship between the two lead characters. It's such a wonderfully sardonic relationship. It's just so great."

Castle is also enthusiastic about another part: "There's a wonderful character that Chris Kattan plays, and he really keeps the movie going. In the original, you just giggle at this guy, drinking his way through the story. And Chris has given it a whole new dimension. He's just funny, not even trying to be funny. Just who he is." □

# HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL

## WILLIAM CASTLE

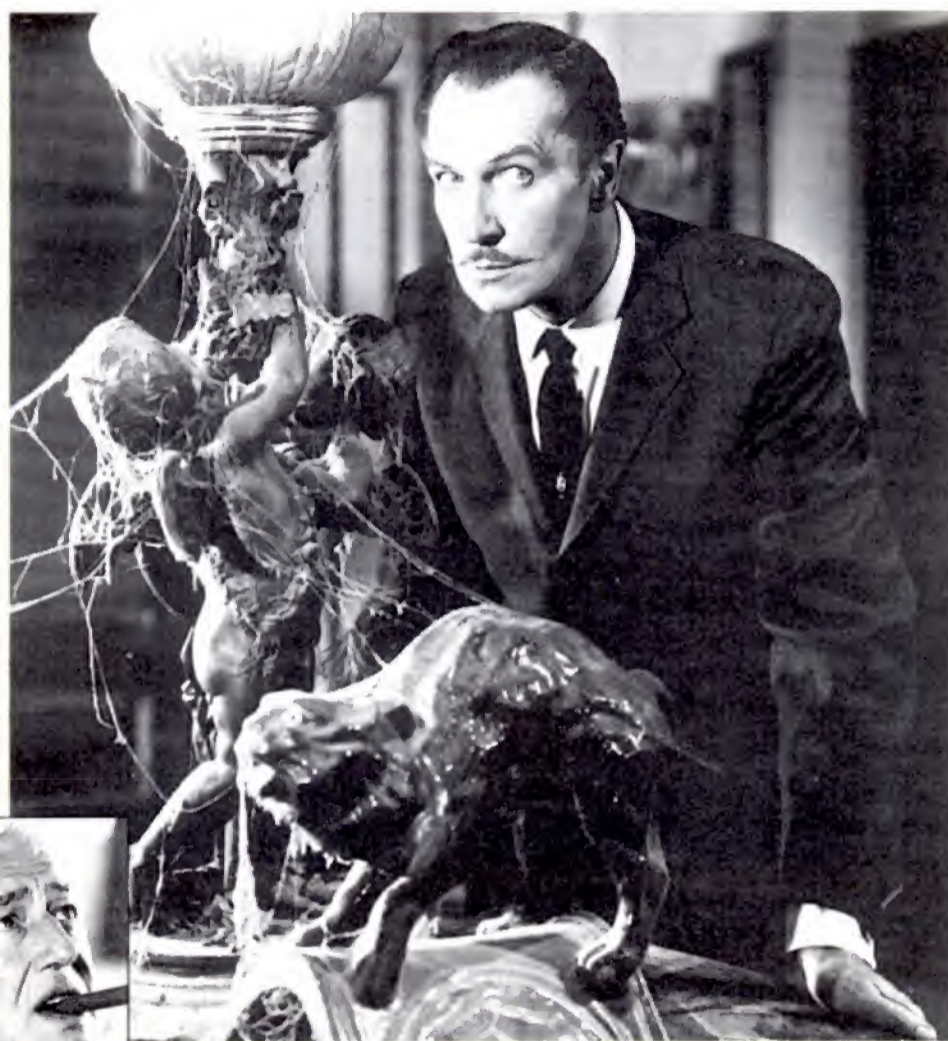
*Daughter Terry Castle on preserving her father's unique horror legacy as the re-make's co-producer.*

By Douglas Eby

As one of the producers for the new version of her father's 1958 film, Terry Castle has been very excited to be involved in both the film, and *Dark Castle*, the new production company bearing her father's name and spirit, who died in 1977: "I was incredibly close to him and his movies. It's just so wonderful that talented filmmakers like Robert Zemeckis and Joel Silver want to remake his movies. Of all my father's films, this one in particular stood out in my mind, especially because of the relationship between the two lead characters: Vincent Price and Carol Ohmart in the original. Another great role is that played by Elisha Cook Jr. [Watson Pritchard], and now by Chris Kattan.

"That's the part I wanted to play," she added, with a laugh. "He's this guy who's out of his mind, and drinking his way through the story."

Asked if she has ever acted, Castle noted that one time when she was five, she was "supposed to star with Joan Crawford in a film called *STRAIT-JACKET*, which my father made. I practiced for a month or more. I'd lie on this couch, and my father would say, 'Now Terry, pretend you see something horrible over there. I want your eyes to grow wide, and your face to drop, and I want it to be the most horrific moment of your life.' And I practiced it. I was good. I was supposed to



Vincent Price in the original. Inset: Castle in horror mogul guise, the incarnation of P. T. Barnum, infusing horror with a carnival flair.

play Diane Baker as a small child, and I looked like her baby pictures, so they picked me." Fortunately for the sake of the film, her mother had told her husband, director Castle, that he should also have another kid, just in case. When Castle got on the set, she couldn't do it. "I flipped out," she admitted. "And then, of course, like any producer, I went to see the film, and said, 'I could have done that better.'"

Castle has worked for a number of years as a producer and director at Nickelodeon. "I've loved working with kids,"

she said. "My father started off writing books for kids. It's funny, a lot of people in the horror genre—it sort of goes together, children and horror. I mean, look at all these Disney films; they're horror stories, to a certain extent. It's that thrill ride, that roller coaster, I think." With respect to her experience as a first-time feature producer, she noted, "there are so many different types of producers."

"Being the daughter, and holding the legacy of my dad's films, I've really felt I wanted to keep some of it sacred, in terms of the relationship, especially of

the main characters. To get someone to do the part that Vincent Price played, I thought was a real challenge, because he had to be off-beat, yet really sexy. Keep you on your toes. You're not sure if you love him or hate him. You kind of hate to love him, like that guy you bring home. You hate to love him, but you can't help yourself. Geoffrey Rush is playing it so magnificently. He's never seen the original, because he doesn't want to see it yet. He wants the character to come from who he sees, and not the character Price played. But I've never seen an actor so on the money as Geoffrey. His instincts are so true to the character. And that has been a tremendous pleasure." The other main character, Annabelle Loren, is played by Famke Janssen, and Castle exclaimed, "She's unbelievably stunning. She's got an edge to her."

Castle has been having a "great time" working on the film. "The fun part is, I first came and saw the set, and walked around with this big smile on my face. There were so many mixed emotions. First, I thought, 'Oh my God, my dad would be so jealous.' He'd want to be doing this again, with these talented people, and the sets that you are now able to do, and the effects. And it reminded me of my whole childhood, growing up on my dad's sets. I think what really got me is that I gave Bill Malone, the director, my dad's leather script cover, and he had the new script in it. So I saw that sitting there the first day, and whoops—there went the tears." □

# SCHWARZENEGGER

## Arnold is desperate to re-invent himself as

By Tom Doherty

Whether as body builder, barbarian, terminator, supercop, comic foil, or cigar-smoking Republican, Arnold Schwarzenegger has always played variations on his best role and most original creation—himself. In a personal and professional journey that has taken him from Teutonophonic dolt to American icon, he has kept in top shape as a physical specimen and one-man entertainment conglomerate. Yet the motion picture career of the sinewy superstar seems to have gotten a bit flabby lately. No wonder folks are looking to *END OF DAYS*, the first feature length film Arnold has shouldered in three years, to see if Hollywood's Hercules can still lift a film to box office heights or if his knees buckle under the pressure.

By the standards of ordinary humans, Arnold remains a heavyweight attraction: for serious career troubles in the ranks of male leads, talk to Sylvester Stallone or Kevin Costner. Still, in a business where a superstar is only as good as his last screen credit, Arnold's recent outings have been all featherweight bouts: *JINGLE ALL THE WAY* (1996), a lackluster Christmas packaged comedy; *ERASER* (1996), a disappointing also-ran behind *INDEPENDENCE DAY* and *MISSION IMPOSSIBLE*; and *BATMAN AND ROBIN* (1997), where as the frosty but not frisky Mr. Freeze he failed to salvage the worst and hopefully last entry in a moribund series. Except for *T2 3D: BATTLE ACROSS TIME* (1996) screened exclusively at Universal Studios Hollywood, Arnold hasn't enjoyed a crowd-pleasing critical success since *TRUE LIES* (1994). Perhaps this is just a bad patch in an extraordinary run of luck, perhaps an authentic mid-career crisis, but Arnold Inc. needs a runaway hit the way Planet Hollywood needs edible cuisine.

The outlines of the Schwarzenegger story to date are already the stuff of legend and *A&E BIOGRAPHY*. It is the tale of a deter-

**“END OF DAYS seeks to both expand his cast of character options and end his dry spell, but it works against his desire for a needed personality transplant.”**



Schwarzenegger and Kevin Pollack face Satan on the eve of Y2K, in a wretched script by Andrew Marlowe that has problems of Biblical proportions.

mined, USA-struck lad from Graz, Austria, who wills a self-transformation by molding the clay of his own flesh. From the first, Schwarzenegger oozed charisma, a glittering statue come to life. From first caress of the camera, his forceful, engaging personality registered vividly on screen, which is not the same thing as acting talent, but more important by far.

Arnold hit pay dirt wielding medieval weapons and saying as little as possible in *CONAN THE BARBARIAN* (1982) and *CONAN THE DESTROYER* (1984). His pop cult timing was fortuitous. As billowing explosions and spectacular pyrotechnics came to define the action adventure genre, the human form of the protagonist swelled up to dimensions as hyperbolic as the FX. Like Marvel Comics superheroes, the new breed of screen stud modeled a buff physique contoured by Nautilus machines and scientifically calibrated freeweights. From the Bronx to Brussels, aspiring male

actors quit their classes in the Stanislavsky method and signed up for Body by Jake.

In the cattle show of beefcake stars from the late '70s and '80s, Stallone, Van Damme, Lundgren and Seagal, Arnold was not just the most physically imposing, but the most approachable and personable. This, and not his awe-inspiring human frame, was the key to his success and why previous musclemen have seldom managed to make the transition from the gym to the screen. In television interviews he revealed a witty, self-deprecating personality that made audiences delighted and reassured. He wasn't going to rip your head off. Consistently underestimated, he soon earned respect not for being the biggest guy in the room but for being among the sharpest.

James Cameron's *THE TERMINATOR* (1984) gave Arnold his breakthrough role, the part that liberated him from swords and sorcery. The robotic determination of the actor athlete well suited the relentless mission of the title character. For all

the computer screen point of view shots, the Terminator was a creature of no internal motivation, pure power and presence, all forward motion. "He will...not...stop!" shrieks Reese of the cyborg, but he could be describing Arnold too. By the time of *TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY* (1991), Arnold's bankability had grown in proportion to the level of CGI magic and Cameron's open-ended budget. With characteristic good humor, Arnold cracked that the \$6 million price tag for the original *TERMINATOR* wouldn't have paid for the catering on *T2*.

Happily, Arnold's natural generosity and career smarts permitted him to mock his own screen persona, to let character actors like Tom Arnold in *T2* or Robert Pastorelli in *ERASER* steal scenes and crack wise at his expense. As a reward, Arnold was embraced affectionately in his transitions to comedy, *TWINS* (1988) and *KINDERGARTEN COP* (1990), where he seemed thrilled to be off the benchpress to yank belly laughs from the

# AT "END OF DAYS"

**an action hero, but his time is running out.**

crowd. Typical too was his SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE appearance with the moronic musclemen Franz and Hans, sending up his alleged "pump-you up" shtick.

Thus, even for a man whose trademark role is a killer cyborg, and whose two most quotable lines are a three word threat ("I'll be back"), Arnold has always been more the likeable lug than the fearsome menace, a larger than life Goliath with the heart of a plucky David. Especially for residents of his adopted country, Arnold also benefits from the intertextual appeal of his all-American success story as the most literal kind of self made man. In the sculpting of his body and his star persona, in the steady improvement of his vernacular English, and in his marriage to a native princess, he embodies the American dream, pumped up and off the scales.

To be sure, Arnold's rise to global domination has not been without missteps. But if the true mettle of a star is tested by his capacity to walk away from certifiable disasters without a scratch on him, Arnold has survived some epic train wrecks. THE LAST ACTION HERO (1993) remains unwatchable and JUNIOR (1994) still engenders wonder as a misconceived high concept (Arnold as a pregnant man) so dead on arrival that audiences were cringing during the trailers. Tellingly, the two genres that have been kindest to Arnold are effects-laden science fiction and slapstick thick comedy, regions where his physique fits the fantastic landscapes or incongruous situations. He has been less successful in integrating himself into a realistic or even quasi realistic milieu. The likes of COMMANDO (1985), RAW DEAL (1986), and RED HEAT (1988) will not figure prominently on his highlight reel. The reason that PREDATOR (1987) worked so well was the surprise genre switch from combat film to SF film in the second act, a move that wisely placed Arnold back on favorable turf. In truth, Arnold's comic book hero proportions consistently threaten to turn any realistic situation into fantasy land, as in ERASER where he literally flies through the air to don a parachute before hitting the ground.

Given his superhuman qualities, the all important question of "rooting interest" can be problematic in an Arnold film. In both THE RUNNING MAN (1987) and TOTAL RECALL (1990) the populations of entire planets must be aligned against him to create any ten-



Arnold plays Jericho Cane, a seedy, undisciplined rebel New York ex-cop, the dreariest of Hollywood character cliches, and a sadly counter-intuitive dramatic choice.

sion or desperation. Like a busty blonde forever doomed to play bimbos, Arnold's best feature, that Olympian physique, is also his limitation. He will never be Robert De Niro, reshaping himself physically with each new role, adopting an accent like a new wardrobe, but he does need to muscle his way into a more varied set of storylines.

END OF DAYS seeks both to expand his cast of character options and to end the dry spell. Arnold assumes a role Mel Gibson or Bruce Willis could sleepwalk through. He plays Jericho Cane, a hard living ex-cop who has—you won't believe this—a problem with authority. Crackpot Catholicism wafts through the atmosphere and biblical mumbo-jumbo drones on the soundtrack as a blasphemous prophecy comes to forbidden fruition. Satan himself roams New York City, cutting out tongues, corrupting innocents, and disrupting mass transit. By mixing carnal knowledge and colorful carnage, his satanic

majesty wants to ring in the new millennium with a bang that will spawn his son, the anti-Christ. Jericho's modest mission is to save the souls of all mankind—but is his own soul pure enough?

What will work against Arnold's personality transplant not to say passing interest in the end of the world as we know it is the wretched screenplay by Andrew Marlowe, a befuddled melange of chic dystopianism and dysfunctional Christianity that reads like a bastard mating of STRANGE DAYS and STIGMATA. Problems of biblical proportions abound in END OF DAYS, among them an apocalyptic portrait of Big Apple rot that is oddly dated, as if the project incubated for years in development hell while Rudolph Giuliani turned Times Square from an urban sinkhole into a Disney-fied theme park. Moreover, as a career move for Arnold, playing the dreariest of Hollywood character cliches, the seedy, undisciplined rebel ex-cop is counter-intuitive. The man's sheer presence bespeaks discipline and self-control: you don't look like that if you drink yourself senseless and ignore good nutrition. On the other hand, in Satan, Lord of the Underworld and all around dirty fighter, Arnold meets an enemy worthy of a *mano a mano* with a former Mr. Olympia.

Perhaps part of the reason for the Schwarzenegger slump is the changing nature of the genre that has traditionally been so good to him. As science fiction and action adventure films have turned more conceptual and computerized in the age of CGI, their heroes have had no reason to develop superhuman physiques or even good muscle tone. With the right software programming, they may as well be nerds as jocks. THE MATRIX, arguably the most original and stylish SF film of the 1990s, cast the slight figure of Keanu Reeves as its acrobatic messiah, with no downside for the fate of the earth. But for Arnold, any demotion to mortal status may be a hard fall, and any effort to punch up his human credentials may pump down his superhuman status. Fortunately, though, END OF DAYS will not be the end of Arnold. Satan notwithstanding and God willing, he will ring in the new millennium, and the Old Schwarzenegger, in truly apocalyptic style, with TERMINATOR 3, slated for release in the year 2000. □

# STUART LITTLE

By Mitch Persons

I first remember hearing of *Stuart Little*, E. B. White's classic 1945 children's novel in 1950, when I was five years old. I can recall my mother reading to me about this plucky mouse named Stuart Little, his winning of a boat race in Central Park pond, his facing down of his arch-rival, Snowbell the cat, and his great affection for a beautiful wren named Margalo.

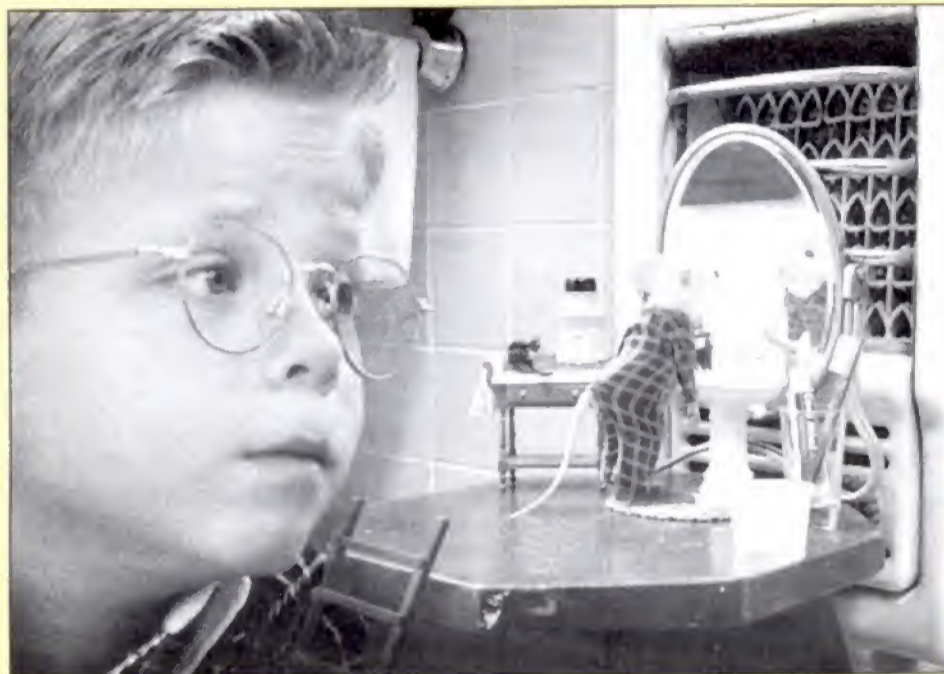
When I got word that Columbia/TriStar was about to embark on a half-live-action, half-CGI version of STUART LITTLE, and that I was to be covering the making of it, I re-read the book. As an adult, I found there were certain disturbing elements that, as a child, I never attempted to question.

On the very first page of the story, it is stated that Stuart was *born* into the *human* Little family. How this oddity of fecundation could possibly happen is never explained. A good portion of the novel deals with Stuart's obsessive pursuit of Margalo. These passages, like the rest of the book, possess the naive winsomeness of another beloved children's tale, *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*. However, since Stuart is a *mouse*, and not a piece of inanimate metal, and Margalo a *bird* rather than a princess made of paper, the image of the two animals eventually linking up romantically seems more like the work of Tennessee Williams than it does Hans Christian Anderson.

There are other, more bizarre relationships. In his travels Stuart meets a human woman named Harriet Ames who is as small as he is. Stuart is happy to meet someone his own size, and makes a date with her. The young rodent prepares for the date by bathing, dressing to the nines, combing his hair (fur?) and giving in to some quite mature—and undeniably libidinous—yearnings, breaking out in a nervous sweat whenever he fantasizes about the girl.

Fortunately, STUART LITTLE screenwriters Gregory J. Brooker and M. Night

**LION KING** director  
**Rob Minkoff** films  
tale of a CGI mouse.



Who's cuter? Jonathan Lipnicki as George watches his new brother Stuart prepare for bedtime in the adaptation of the E. B. White children's classic.

Shaymylan had not forgotten that the tale of the anthropomorphic mouse and his search for life and love was written for children, and not cranky adults like me. They retained the gentle charm of White's book, while at the same time toning down the more questionable parts of the story. In the Douglas Wick-produced film, Stuart is adopted into the Little family. Gone are Margalo the bird, and with her, Stuart's obsession and all references (however slight) to possible cohabitation. As of this writing, there is no knowledge of the diminutive Harriet Ames being part of the screenplay, but if she does appear, chances are CGI Stuart's un-mouse-like ruminations about her will also be eliminated or made more palatable to the family audience the film is intended for. Columbia/TriStar opens their charming effects *tour de force* fantasy nationwide December 10.

There is a very definite air of familial closeness about this movie. Walking onto the

mammoth Central Park pond set that production designer Bill Brzeski reproduced at the Sony Studios in Culver City, California, is like arriving at the real park to attend a picnic that a beloved relative is giving. Forget that the buildings are a painted backdrop, or that the leaves on the trees are made of silk to prevent their wilting, or that there are real life-guards positioned off-screen to halt any aquatic mishaps. Couples in bright summer-Sunday costumes stroll about, laughing, talking, throwing bits of bread to unseen pigeons. Little boys run by holding bright red balloons. Baby carriages are everywhere. Always there is that delicate hum of solid family life. Stuart's adopted father, Mr. Little (Hugh Laurie,) and Mrs. Little (Geena Davis) are absorbed in conversation with Stuart's older "brother," George (eight-year-old Jonathon Lipnicki.) What they are saying cannot be heard, but there is a look in both Davis' and Laurie's eyes when addressing Lipnicki that speaks of a very deep and tender love.

Strong ancestral ties are subjects that the director of STUART LITTLE, Rob Minkoff, has dealt with in the past. Remember the bond between Mufasa and Simba? The tenderness that Simba and Nala felt for one another? That's right. Minkoff was the director of none other than THE LION KING.

"STUART LITTLE is my first live-action film," said Minkoff, "and the transition has been virtually seamless. Everybody always asks me the inevitable question about dealing with actors as opposed to dealing with characters that are created by animators. Well, to a great degree working with an actor is very much the same as working with an animator. The only difference, the big difference really is—and this is an interesting thing—there is another process involved in live-action, the main distinction being when you do an animated movie, you're creating the work, or creating the scenes that you need to tell the story. In live-action, you create the scene in three dimensions, and then you shoot it. You



Stuart moves in, groundbreaking visual effects technology by Sony Pictures Imageworks, supervised by John Dykstra. The title character represents the most ambitious effort to date of photo realistic animation.

have a few more options in editing film than you do in animation, so the kind of planning and preproduction that goes into an animated film results in the film itself.

"I like to differentiate the two cinema forms by comparing painting with photography, just in the sense that they're both mediums of expression. One, where you create what's on the canvas, and the other, where you are recording through a machine. It's distinct in that way, but in terms of how one would think as a filmmaker, it's the same thing. You just get there differently, meaning that the people that I have to work with, collaborate with, and rely on in a live-action picture have their counterpart in an animated picture, with only slight variations. The cinematographer in a live-action picture is equivalent to the head of layout in an animated picture. With the head of layout, you have the same kinds of discussions: how are you going to shoot the scene, how do you want to tell the story, which character do you want to have a close-up on, how should the camera move? In a sense, in animation you have the same kinds of discussions, even though you're using a two-dimensional approach to creating. The camera, in fact, doesn't move in an animated movie, but you talk about the camera moving.

"Inevitably, of course, there

are some differences. A scene in an animated movie is just one shot in a live-action movie. And the vocabulary is different. There is the real change when you come from animation, learning that vocabulary; making the translation from what you understand, what you know as an animation filmmaker, and then learning what the equivalents are in a live-action context. That is truly challenging. That's the biggest part of the challenge, in a way.

"You have to learn all the vocabulary of a live-action movie, so that you understand how to communicate with everybody on the set, and in the same way that the language is intended to communicate with, you have to learn the subtleties of the language to communicate effectively yourself. Not too long

Stuart's proud parents, Geena Davis and Hugh Laurie as Mr. & Mrs. Little. Columbia TriStar opens their winning family fantasy nationwide December 10.



**“You have to learn the vocabulary of live-action. An A.D came by and said they were ‘bringing in the first team,’ a phrase you don’t hear in animation.”**

—Director Rob Minkoff—

ago, one of our A.D.'s came by while I was taking a break and told me that they were bringing in the first team. Now, the phrase 'bringing in the first team' is one that you just don't hear in animation. You have to learn what that means.

"But what do we really have here? Is there really that much of a disparity between live action and animation? In both cases, or I think in all cases in a movie, you're trying to tell a story by characters. So wherever the setting, the plains of Africa, or the hot asphalt streets of New York City, the same issues apply, meaning you're still dealing with personalities and the stories and the journeys that the characters will make to tell the story. The setting, the medium, is actually of secondary concern. In whatever medium you are working in, it should amplify whatever themes you're trying to invoke in the story, the context of the story.

"STUART LITTLE, as a film, emphasizes love, strong family values, the need for independence, all the elements that were present in THE LION KING. The fact that one film was a cartoon and the other mostly live-action makes no difference.

"When you think about it, you realize that every director who works has to have a first job, and people come from different experiences and different backgrounds. Not everyone, in a sense, comes up through the ranks of live-action, because filmhood does not always work that way. One of the greatest comedy directors of all time, Frank Tashlin, started off as an animator for Warner Bros.

"For anybody who's directed for the first time, I think that the crew and the people involved in the project are more concerned about what the director is bringing to that project in terms of storytelling, because that's what this is all about: how you achieve it, within the context of the people working on the movie. The essential thing is what's important in the story that you're trying to tell. That is what I am bringing here, with STUART LITTLE. I think people feel confident that regardless of my differing experience, these things—story, character, theme—are still fundamental." □

# Sleepy Hollow

**Director Tim Burton on his poetic ode to Hammer horror.**

By Alan Jones

The last thing you expect to come across in a pastoral stretch of England's Thames Valley, just to the west of London, is a turn-of-the-century upstate New York village. Turn of the century as in 1799, that is! For here is where the East Coast colonial hamlet of Sleepy Hollow was built from scratch in November 1998 for director Tim Burton's latest foray into fearsome fantasy, one freely adapted from Washington Irving's American classic fairy tale *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. But don't expect Burton's SLEEPY HOLLOW to be anything like the straightforward treatments it has already received in the past, most notably in the Walt Disney cartoon compendium *THE ADVENTURES OF ICHABOD AND MR. TOAD* (1949) narrated by Bing Crosby, and less impressively in a 1980 television movie by director Henning Schellerup starring Jeff Goldblum and American football hero Dick Butkus. Every Burton film to date, from *BATMAN* and *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS* to *BETLEJUICE* and *MARS ATTACKS!*, have all existed in their own singular and self-enclosed universes for a deliciously dreamy effect and the

ex-Disney employee's take on SLEEPY HOLLOW will be no exception with an added bonus for devotees of Hammer horror films of the '50s and '60s.

"I'm a huge fan of those movies and SLEEPY HOLLOW contains a lot of that type of classic images of beautiful horror," enthused Burton. "It also has a great mix of fantasy, drama and humor. In many ways this is my first out-and-out horror film. I love the lurid beauty of Hammer horror and SLEEPY HOLLOW is my interpretation of the feeling I got when I first saw that kind of gore and those vivid blood red colors as a child."

When location manager Keith

Burton directs Depp, performing an autopsy on one of the Horseman's headless victims, their third collaboration after *ED WOOD* and *EDWARD SCISSORHANDS*.



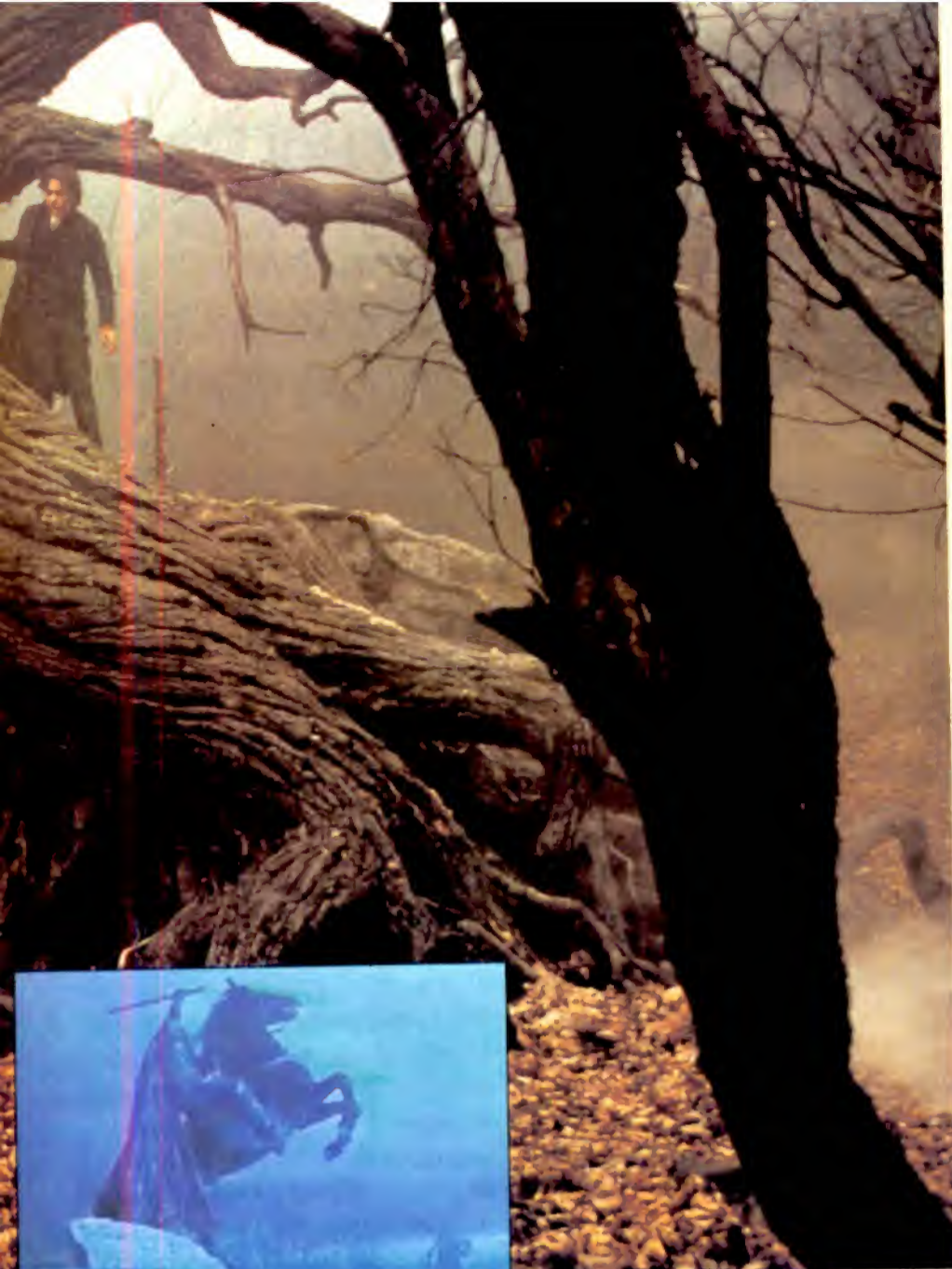
Katrina Van Tassel (Christina Ricci) cradles Young Masbeth (Marc Pickering), as Ichabod Crane (Johnny Depp) prepares to face the Headless Horseman.

Hatcher came upon it, the Sleepy Hollow site consisted of a 20-acre unspoiled meadow with a duck pond in the middle known as Lime Tree Valley on the Hambleton Estate near the town of Marlow. It was on these private hunting grounds that production designer Rick Heinrichs constructed a picturesque version of a Dutch colonial village complete with Gothic fixtures and fittings at a

cost of \$1.3 million. Lining the muddy main street—which Burton often referred to as “Woodstock revisited!”—are a Covered Bridge over a man-made stream, a Blacksmiths, a General Store, a Church, the Tavern & Hayloft public house, Doctor T. Lancaster's office, a Livery Stable, the Mill House, Mr. Killian's Farm, Notary Public and Country Records, Mr. Philipse's Residence and a Watch House, the police station of its day. It's to this establishment that Ichabod Crane, an eccentric and earnest constable with an unconventional approach to solving crime, is sent from New York to investigate a string of murders in the area seemingly carried out by a ghostly Headless Horseman.

But while trying to apply his limited knowledge of forensic science to the mysteriously eerie occurrences, Ichabod falls in love with the bewitching Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter of Sleepy Hollow's most affluent family, much to the annoyance of her hopeful suitor Brom Van Brunt. And so the





**“I love the lurid beauty of Hammer,” said Burton. “This is my interpretation of the feeling I got when I first saw that kind of gore and the vivid red blood colors as a child.”**

cent slate includes Alan Parker’s ANGELA’S ASHES, Martin Scorsese’s BRING OUT THE DEAD and a new version of THE STEPFORD WIVES. If we have any overriding ethos it’s that we look for character-driven material which will attract terrific directors and actors. There are wonderful stories to be told irrespective of large or small budgets and when SLEEPY HOLLOW came our way we were eager to get it off the ground as quickly as possible.”

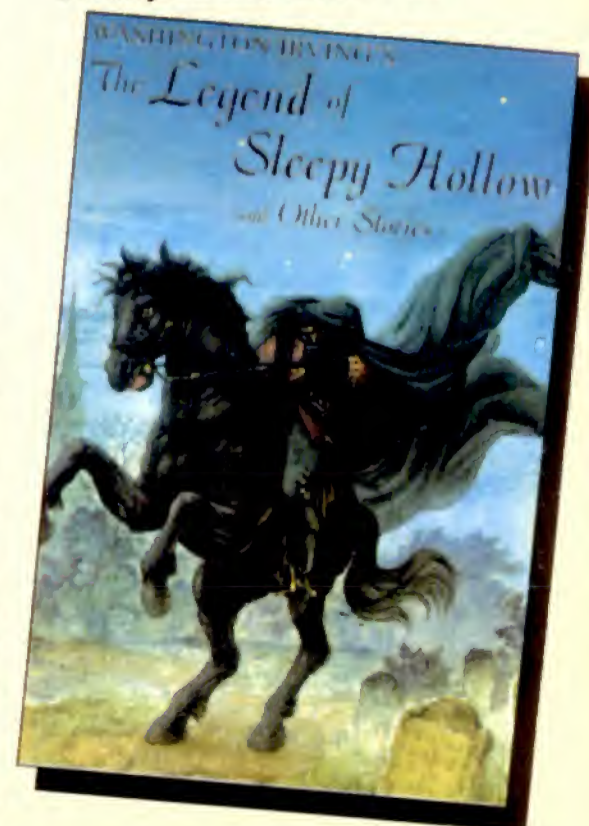
However, the one person Rudin and Schroeder wanted to direct SLEEPY HOLLOW was consistently unavailable. Schroeder pointed out, “If there was ever a piece of material that seemed right up Tim Burton’s alley, it was this one. We always thought about it with Tim in mind but he was never available. So while Tim was working on SUPERMAN REBORN for Warner Bros. we toiled on the script with Andy Walker to get it into the kind of shape that we hoped would attract him somewhere down the line. Then we heard on the grapevine that the SUPERMAN project wasn’t working out and we got the SLEEPY HOLLOW script to him immediately. Sure enough, we got the reaction we were expecting; Tim’s response was instantaneous and he jumped at it. Everything came into place very quickly after that and within a couple of weeks we were at Paramount budgeting and getting ready to shoot. There was never anyone else other than Tim we were considering. He was always our dream director and SLEEPY HOLLOW turned out to be one of those terrific instances where we got exactly what we wanted.”

The SLEEPY HOLLOW script arrived at a juncture in Burton’s professional life that was turning out to be a bit of a nightmare. Noted the director, “I had been working on SUPERMAN REBORN for about a year and it clearly wasn’t go-

ing in the right direction. I didn’t know what to do. Then I was offered SLEEPY HOLLOW and I just really liked the idea because Andy Walker’s script was a very strong one. Frankly, I was more familiar with the Disney cartoon than the actual story which I didn’t read until recently. Yet like everyone else in America it seems, while I might not have read the story, I certainly knew all about the Headless Horseman myth.

“THE ADVENTURES OF ICHABOD AND MR. TOAD cartoon influenced me a lot over my decision to make SLEEPY HOLLOW. I really liked the cartoon and now think that’s one of the reasons why I wanted to go and work at Disney in the first place. The artists [Wolfgang Reitherman and John Sibley] created a wonderful sense of story which was funny, scary and visceral all at the same time. The layout and color design were so beautiful too and it had a great energy. Plus it captured the feeling of upstate New York very well for an animated featurette...it’s such a

Irving’s fairy tale classic has been filmed twice before, most notably as a Disney animated short in 1949.



stage is set for a sweeping fantasy epic featuring an extraordinary cast of peculiar characters dabbling in all sorts of supernatural shenanigans and spooky weirdness in the trademark Burton style. Noted Burton, “Ichabod is someone who is basically behind the times and ahead of them and it’s the contradictory aspects of his character which are always fun and interesting. You want to know why I’m making SLEEPY HOLLOW? Because it allows me to contrast a person who lives primarily in his head with another who doesn’t have one. That’s a wonderful symbol. And because we too are on the brink of a new millennium like the characters are in the story.”

SLEEPY HOLLOW was originally developed for the screen by makeup designer Kevin Yagher, working with scripter Andrew Kevin Walker, before he was hot of the success of SEVEN. One of the most important desks the SLEEPY HOLLOW script ended up on was that of veteran producer Scott Rudin, whose impressive list of credits includes THE TRU-

MAN SHOW, CLUELESS and THE ADDAMS FAMILY. Noted Adam Schroeder, a producer in Rudin’s production company and the man responsible for A SIMPLE PLAN, “Andy Walker came in to pitch SLEEPY HOLLOW to us. I was a huge fan of SEVEN and Andy seemed to have this perfect take on Irving and how best to revisit *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. There are so few American fairy tales and this is one people do have preconceived notions about even if they only know the two most famous things about it: Ichabod Crane and the Headless Horseman. That’s probably because they were forced to read it in high school. What Walker and Yagher did so expertly was take those original elements and craft an amazing Gothic supernatural horror story with a terrific romance. Frankly, we jumped at the chance to produce it.”

Schroeder continued, “Our production company is always on the look-out for the unusual. We’re purposely all over the place and don’t like to get pigeon-holed with one type of movie. Our re-

The Tree of Dread set at Shepperton Studios. Left: The CGI Horseman.



Johnny Depp as New York policeman Ichabod Crane, investigating a series of beheadings in *Sleepy Hollow*, aided by Marc Pickering as Young Masbeth.

**“I’m making SLEEPY HOLLOW,” said Burton, “because it allows me to contrast a person who lives in his head with another who doesn’t have one. That’s a wonderful symbol.”**

in upstate New York where Irving’s story is set and the atmosphere there is more a feeling than a tangible thing. There is an actual Sleepy Hollow town there and it’s so weird because all the insignias, like on the sides of police cars, have the Headless Horsemen on them! We did think of filming there but because SLEEPY HOLLOW was going to be such an intricately designed film I didn’t think it was all that important. The town is its own character and I felt we could achieve that more by building it from the ground up rather than use an existing location. I like those Hudson Valley paintings, with their very rounded hills and little villages nestling in the depressions, housing Dutch communities. It’s strangely Japanese, with their rolling hills and descending mists, with a little German expressionism mixed in and to get that feeling meant complete fabrication. Strangely enough, New York, which is such a great city with so many fantastic artists, in terms of actual film artistry there aren’t the back up resources there. In England we found the perfect place for our entire needs.”

The decision to shoot in England was a mutual one made between Burton, Scott Rudin,

Paramount Pictures and Adam Schroeder, who noted, “What we really needed in terms of making this movie exactly the way we wanted it was a combination of location within a contained environment with a lot of studio space relatively near by for all our stylized exteriors. Building Sleepy Hollow at Lime Tree Valley meant we had Leavesden Studios [where GOLDENEYE and THE PHANTOM MENACE were shot] a short drive away and it was big enough for our massive construction needs.” However, even Leavesden didn’t provide enough space and one key set, the Western Woods—home of the sinister Tree of the Dead, the Headless Horseman’s gateway between this world and the netherworld—was built at Shepperton Studios.

Noted Schroeder, “This is the first time our company has filmed in the United Kingdom. We knew the industry here had some of the best artisans and craftsmen in the world and that has turned out to be an important part of the success of the look of SLEEPY HOLLOW. We did bring some key personnel over from the States, but the crew is mostly British. Of course, Tim does have the connection here after filming BATMAN at

Burton, mad horror artist, adds more blood to wife Lisa Marie, in a nod to the imagery of Mario Bava’s BLACK SUNDAY, one of the film’s design inspirations.



haunted place and I love it.”

Burton gave the script his own spin once he joined the project, and playwright Tom Stoppard, who won an Oscar for SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE, subsequently tweaked the script further during production.

Noted Burton, “There’s only a little blood in the film. I suppose it will get an R rating, but it certainly doesn’t seem like one to me. I have no idea how the ratings board feels about heads being chopped off. The only movies I ever watched from the earliest age were horror movies and they were all bloody. It’s fairy tale violence I’m dealing with and I have a different perspective on that than most.”

When SLEEPY HOLLOW was in its development stage, producer Adam Schroeder admits the prospective budget

could have gone in any direction. “Obviously, Tim coming aboard pushed the budget into the higher bracket,” he said. “Any time you’re dealing with a movie set in a specific period there are going to be additional expenses involved. Especially when you are dealing with creating a world no one has seen before from scratch. With Tim in the frame it became incredibly artistic, stylized and design orientated but we never put any barriers on what this movie should be. We only knew we wanted to do it right and it wasn’t going to be cheap whichever way we looked at it.”

Doing the allegedly \$90 million production right meant coming to England where he had directed BATMAN in Burton’s surprising estimation. “In the last ten years I’ve spent a lot of time

# Sleepy Hollow

## HEADLESS HORSEMAN

*Effects supervisor Jim Mitchell on adding the headless horror using CGI.*

Pinewood Studios. It's exactly ten years ago that he shot **BATMAN** in England, so it has been a nice coming home for him."

Being in England once more meant Burton could also draw on what he considers the best pool of talented character actors in the business. Fleshing out the Brit-heavy cast are Miranda Richardson, Michael Gambon, Richard Griffiths, Ian (THE PHANTOM MENACE) McDiarmid, Steven Waddington and long-time Burton favorite Michael Gough, Alfred the solicitous butler in the **BATMAN** series.

Burton enthused, "I'm working with a great number of wonderful British actors again. It's so great to work with Michael Gough once more. I was directing him a few nights ago and went home to catch him on television in the movie **THE LEGEND OF HELL HOUSE**. He played a corpse and did a great job—he didn't move too much! He's like a silent movie actor who can suggest things without even opening his mouth. That's a good quality for **SLEEPY HOLLOW**. I look at each and every one of my diverse supporting cast and they are incredible together. They might not have a lot to do but each has become their character and it has been exciting to watch them inhabit their personae. They have all tried to make the unreal real and they're just brilliant."

**F**or the lead role of Ichabod Crane Burton turned to Johnny Depp, the actor he's worked with twice before in his cult hits **EDWARD SCISSORHANDS** and **ED WOOD**. Noted Burton, "It's back to what I was saying about silent movie acting. Johnny falls into the same category because he uses his eyes to project meaning and character. We've worked together before so we know what each other is about and it's fun to be able to see him do something different each time. It gives you a good energy. Johnny is willing to try anything and that's what I love about him. I know he's not the traditional image of the Ichabod character but Johnny has this kind of in-and-out-of-it quality I felt was important for the role. He's sort of in tune with things on one level but

On the damp and muddy **SLEEPY HOLLOW** set an unusual cry would often boom around the location. But while "the sphere of reference" order was often intoned back in jokey awed reverence by actor Casper Van Dien, those four words were key ones indeed for visual effects supervisor Jim Mitchell. The **MIGHTY JOE YOUNG** Oscar winner played an integral role in the computer graphics imagery of such blockbusters as **JURASSIC PARK** and **JUMANJI** and served in the same capacity on Burton's **MARS ATTACKS!** On **SLEEPY HOLLOW**, Mitchell's sphere of reference, a reflecting orb to gauge light intensities, was a vital tool for getting the look of future digital compositions exactly right.

Noted Mitchell, "Tim wanted to shoot the movie as if the Horseman really has no head and it's my job to make sure I'm getting all the elements I need for erasing it while not getting in anybody's way. Because the stunt Headless Horseman, Matt Cooper, wears a blue hood in most of the shots, everyone is assuming we're doing a blue screen extraction. But that's more for delineating where the Horseman's actual head is in relation to his collar. The blue hood gives us a color to separate out. That means hand rotoscoping along the collar and, for a lot of the shots in front of the Headless Horseman, we have to reconstruct the whole collar within



Effects supervisor Jim Mitchell rehearses Miranda Richardson for her confrontation with the Headless Horseman. Below & right: The final CGI effect.



work. You do try and avoid smoke and lightning, yet that's precisely what they are using here.

"Occasionally we will do a master shot and add those elements in, but Tim is using too much atmosphere to try and replicate the whole thing. He's whad a big expensive set built and he obviously wants to maximize its use."



Also back in the olden days, to achieve a headless effect, the actor's head would have just been tucked under a massive built-up costume. Mitchell laughed, "If only we

could still get away with that one! That device always used to make the proportions all wrong anyway. And in the instance of the climactic battle between the Headless Horseman, Ichabod and Brom, there's no way that could have worked with all the horse riding, intricate stunt fighting and hands flailing around. That means more headaches for us because Johnny Depp and Casper Van Dien are constantly crossing the Headless Horseman, which means the stuntman's head will be blocking their faces so we have to replicate the actors too."

Alan Jones

the computer."

Noted Mitchell, "In the olden days this could have been done by motion control—but then we'd have been shooting until December 1999! Here I just need Matt to step out of frame, so where his head is blocking the Covered Bridge, it gives me a clean background to work from. If the cameraman is doing moves on the shot, I have him replicate them as close as he can too. We do have the software to help us track and duplicate it properly. The very tricky part has been with all the atmospherics and fog they're using. That's a killer for my type of effects

# Sleepy Hollow

## EFFECTS ATMOSPHERE

*Effects supervisor Joss Williams on providing Burton with fog on demand.*

Effects supervisor Joss Williams has worked on such major movies as *THE AVENGERS*, *JUDGE DREDD*, *ALIEN 3* and *INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE*, but he's never had such a large amount of ambient atmospherics to handle as he has on *SLEEPY HOLLOW*.

"Smoke is in every frame of the movie and is the biggest part of the entire look. We've used different layers of smoke and fog fluids, sometimes real mist. The latter effect is a bit wet while the two former make you choke. But, hey, it's movies!"

Huge advances in the fog machine industry—thanks to hi-tech stage shows and rock music events—means the safety risks in smoky atmospherics are now at a minimum. Noted Williams, "Navy smoke used to be the standard on film sets using cracked oil but not anymore because the particles were so big and hazardous to the health. You were literally breathing oil into your lungs and it was made illegal. It's quite a science now. We can put fog fluids—usually Glycol—into interiors, a lot more for exterior shots, through heating or agitation and program them to dissipate in 20 or 30 minutes. The machines are infra-red controlled and completely automatic. They will pick up the amount of smoke particles in the atmosphere and balance it accordingly.

"Mist is easy to make. It's only atomized tap water that's been put under 3000 pounds of pressure per square inch," said Williams. "We love going to the Sleepy Hollow location to cre-



Effects supervisor Joss Williams rigs a grisly death for one *SLEEPY HOLLOW* resident who gets speared by the Horseman with a fence post.

ate that because its success is often dependent on ambient temperature. At the moment, it's freezing out there, and as a result we've been able to create fog effects up to 20 feet high to tree level. Very sinister and perfect for the kind of Hammer horror feeling Tim is going for. We've also used the fog machines to create a very low cloud base because we are doing some exteriors as interiors back at Leavesden and that disguises the stages very well. Using the old methods we could never have had the control we do now. The amount of fog we have been putting on the stages would have been unthinkable a few years back as it would have taken ages to dissipate. Now we know how long that will take to the second and it's great to be able to control something like atmosphere to that degree."

Aside from the atmospherics, Williams has had numerous other problems to solve on *SLEEPY HOLLOW*—the reason he started work on the film in September, 1998, a full two months before principal shoot-

ing began.

"One of our most interesting physical effect challenges was creating a horse-drawn carriage for a stunt where Johnny Depp chases the Headless Horseman on the coach and falls off the back. Tim wanted it done for real without any recourse to blue screen work."

Aside from making different variations of foam pumpkins for a scene where Ichabod gets one thrown in his face, and building the mechanics for one character being speared from behind with

a fence post, Williams also built the mechanical rig for the end sequence where Brom Van Brunt gets torn apart. Noted Williams, "The whole point there is that the Headless Horseman is trying not to kill Brom because he has nothing against him yet ends up severing him in two instead with an axe in one hand and a sword in the other. We developed a severing system with a free-standing dummy of actor Casper Van Dien that was deliberately developed to pose in any position. Once Casper is out of the way, we posed the dummy in exactly the same position. Headless Horseman stuntman Matt Cooper then goes through the chopping motion, we pull a release mechanism, the dummy spins around, moves up about a foot, and splits in half as the legs collapse at the same time. All in camera, looking great, and all done with a simple spring-loaded mechanism and ball joints. I've loved doing as much in camera as possible rather than waiting until post-production."

Alan Jones

not attuned to others on another. That's a very human quality to me and Johnny exactly captures the spirit of what I have always believed the Ichabod character to be about, which is gawkiness combined with intelligence. But his type of intelligence turns him into a tunnel-vision thinker and that's Ichabod's trauma in this story we're telling."

Before Burton was part of the *SLEEPY HOLLOW* package, producer Adam Schroeder was also on the same Johnny Depp wavelength. "Johnny's name kept coming up as someone who would be the perfect Ichabod," said Schroeder. "We always wanted to go younger than people might have been expecting. We figured an older, haunted guy, like John Malkovich say, would be too conservative a casting choice. Johnny is a physically dynamic character who has that obsessive quality combined with a sexy brashness we thought would really be important to the success of the film. It's as Scott [Rudin] said, that Johnny is as much a design element in the movie as any piece of scenery."

Starring opposite Depp as Katrina Van Tassel is Christina Ricci who, with *THE OPPOSITE OF SEX* and *THE ICE STORM*, has made a seamless transition into more mature roles since her portrayal of Wednesday Addams in *THE ADDAMS FAMILY*. Burton remarked, "With a fairy tale such as *SLEEPY HOLLOW* you must build the cast in an interesting way. It wasn't so much as why cast Christina as why not? It's such a funny group of people in this cast and they all have different vibes. I'm enjoying playing them off each other for a feeling of fantasy strangeness."

Other American cast members include Casper Van Dien as

Burton sets up a shot with celebrated Mexican cinematographer Emmanuel Lubezki, supersaturating the horror.



# Makeup Mogul

## Director Kevin Yagher on launching development of SLEEPY HOLLOW.

By Alan Jones

The long journey to SLEEPY HOLLOW began six years ago. That was when special effects makeup artist Kevin Yagher felt the time was right for a proper feature version of the Washington Irving classic, included in the author's 1819 anthology *Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* Noted the creator of effects for STARSHIP TROOPERS and BRIDE OF CHUCKY, "I had a favorite picture storybook when I was a child and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, along with Irving's *Rip Van Winkle*, was featured in it. I fell in love with the *Ichabod Crane* tale and got into the movie business solely because I always wanted to turn it into a feature.

"Even back then I knew it would have to be a new take on the old story because all the tale really consists of is a chase at the end between Ichabod and the Headless Horseman. It only takes 20 minutes to read the whole novella! So I felt it was important the core story be fleshed out into a more well-rounded fable. My idea was to craft a new tale built around the fact that Sleepy Hollow had been a real place and the story had been handed down from actual folk legend."

That was in 1994 and Yagher looked around for a writer to help him get a handle on the gestating concept. "I got hold of my agent and she introduced me to a young writer named Andrew Kevin Walker who had just got into town and was shopping around a script titled SEVEN. I gave that a read and fell absolutely in love with it. Andy

seemed the perfect guy for me to team up with. Over the next three months at my house we bashed out a script and came up with the whole detailed story. Then we began pitching it around town."

Once Burton was on board the project, co-story writer Yagher saw all hope of ever directing SLEEPY HOLLOW vanish completely. Yagher, who had his name removed from the directing credits of HELLRAISER: BLOODLINES, shrugged, "I won't deny I was interested in directing SLEEPY HOLLOW while Andy and I were fleshing out the story. But once Tim got involved, I graciously stepped down. I used to joke that if someone of Tim's caliber ever came on board I would step down in a second. And he did! So I did. Tim was the best thing to happen to the script and I'd have been stupid not to recognize he was the right man for the job."

Naturally, Burton wanted to put his own imprint on the script, and that was fine by Yagher. "It

Setting up one of Yagher's special effects heads for a decapitation on the set of SLEEPY HOLLOW, content to turn over the directing reins to Tim Burton.



Makeup man turned producer-director, Yagher works on his design for TRICK OR TREAT (1986), an early Halloween horror assignment for Dino De Laurentiis.

had a very serious tone when we first wrote it, but Tim brought his sense of humor to it—like he does with everything," said Yagher. "It was interesting to stand back and watch that happen. It was always scary and dramatic but Tim's quirkiness took it beyond our expectations and made it into something better. With all the death in the story, it does get quite gruesome but Tim's humor lightened all that up. If I'd have ended up directing SLEEPY HOLLOW I would probably have gone further into the darkness and horror. I now see how that would have been the wrong turn to take. Tim added his own distinctive flavor and the film is much better for it."

Critically acclaimed creature man Kevin Yagher may not

have been too bothered about losing out directing SLEEPY HOLLOW in deference to Tim Burton, but there was no way he was going to relinquish the special makeup effects on his brainchild. "Having been so involved in the script there was a tremendous amount I wrote in I really wanted to do," he said. "That was part of my deal. I wanted loads of decapitations, dead animals, mechanical horses, dead bodies and creature stuff like bats. What has been so great about working with Tim is that he comes from the animation side of things. We talk the same game even if it does take him a while before he sees something. A lot of directors will lay out exactly what they want and if you vary from it you're in trouble. Not Tim. He's give and take and always respects your input. Having now gone through the SLEEPY HOLLOW show with him, I've learned the best course of action is to present him with different flexible options so he can improvise on them."

Obviously the main special effects workload in SLEEPY HOLLOW concerned the decapitations. Many of the cast meet the Headless Horseman in the course of the fantasy action and Yagher had to ensure each head looked like the victim in question. □

# Sleepy Hollow

## DESIGN COLLABORATORS

*Production designer Rick Heinrichs has been a long time Burton colleague.*

"You don't often get the opportunity to design an entire town," said SLEEPY HOLLOW production designer Rick Heinrichs who has worked with director Tim Burton in varying capacities over the past 20 years. "Especially one that is supposed to represent the state of Ichabod Crane's mind when he arrives in the place. That's the whole point of Sleepy Hollow—it's a dreamlike space full of portentousness and houses with tumorous growths on them, all huddled together to hide a nightmare. I love working on organic designs so SLEEPY HOLLOW was right up my alley."

Heinrichs worked with Burton on VINCENT, FRANKENWEENIE, PEEWEE'S BIG ADVENTURE, BEETLEJUICE and THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, but SLEEPY HOLLOW has been their most exciting collaboration yet. It all began when Tim Burton called-up Heinrichs to work on the production design of the still-born SUPERMAN REBORN. "For a year we worked on Tim's take of the Superman myth," said Heinrichs. "The thrust of that piece was Clark Kent was an alien from another planet yet he was unaware of his identity. It was a complete retelling of the comic book hero. Every story that Tim's going to do finally becomes his own. Tim was going for a strong dark Metropolis, not quite Gotham, more like Chicago and we had been looking at Pittsburgh as a location which we both felt was more bourgeois. I have to tell you it was great to start working on SLEEPY HOLLOW and actually have cameras



Heinrichs (r) and Burton pose with the models from VINCENT, Burton's 1982 stop-motion debut for Disney, which Heinrichs produced as well as sculpted.

finally rolling!"

Once pre-production began on SLEEPY HOLLOW, the first thing Heinrichs and Burton had to discuss was where they were actually going to film the Irving classic. "We experimented with many different ideas on that subject initially and eventually went to Tarrytown, north of New York. Could we take over some of their historical areas and add buildings to them? Could we hide what we didn't want to see? Frankly, the architecture was too much of the time and, as great as it looks, there was a simplicity to it which didn't quite lend itself to the SLEEPY HOLLOW story or milieu. What we had to put across was this little Dutch community of houses in upstate New York fearfully crowded together so when you walked down its main street the unease was a palpable thing. So rather than

try and give existing buildings that feeling, we decided to build it all from scratch and add the expressive qualities ourselves. We called the look we wanted 'Colonial Expressionism,' a sort of thatched pastiche of Dutch, English Tudor and French domestic architecture."

That decision was made after Heinrichs had also scouted towns in the United Kingdom. "Tim's work is so stylized anyway it made much more sense to build Sleepy Hollow and take it as far away from the accuracy of, say, THE CRUCIBLE. SLEEPY HOLLOW is not supposed to be a history lesson, it's a fun tale of terror, a Gothic horror movie. Actually, we're not supposed to call it that, but it is a definite Gothic fable. Building the entire town was really a question of budget and how far the studio wanted to go with it."

Alan Jones

Brom Van Brunt, Christopher Walken, Burton's wife Lisa Marie and Jeffrey Jones (who appeared in BEETLEJUICE and ED WOOD). In the same way that Burton paid homage to his love of American International Pictures and the Roger Corman directed Edgar Allan Poe series by casting Vincent Price in a small role in EDWARD SCISSORHANDS, he cast Hammer stalwart Christopher Lee in SLEEPY HOLLOW. The actor irrevocably tied to the character of Dracula in the Hammer House of Horror series plays the New York City police official who sonorously sends Ichabod Crane off to investigate the murders in Sleepy Hollow.

**F**or Burton, the Hammer connection is vitally important to SLEEPY HOLLOW. He said, "It's not that I'm trying to emulate a particular favorite because, when you look at them now, they are all over the place," he said. "It's often a case of them being more intense in your memory than they truly were, even though each film contains at least one wonderful chilling moment. No, it's more that I could never tell what time it was in those old Hammer movies. They would have to put something like '1842: London' at the beginning to let you know because you could never tell from the costumes or dialogue. It was that kind of naive simplicity I wanted more than SLEEPY HOLLOW being a hardcore period piece. Hammer movies were always set in some strange fantasy land and one where historical accuracy was never allowed to intrude."

As a frame of reference, Burton encouraged his core crew of production designer Rick Heinrichs, costume designer Colleen Atwood and director of photography Emmanuel Lubezki to watch such films as Mario Bava's BLACK SUNDAY along with the Hammer classics. The hard-edged fairy tale images Burton wanted were then expertly enhanced through the highly stylized lighting and tightly controlled color palette permeating the entire production. Noted Lubezki, the Mexican genius behind the sensational look of A LITTLE PRINCESS and LIKE

**“We wanted to achieve an almost black and white feel,” said director of photography Emmanuel Lubezki, “very monochromatic with a lot of contrast.”**

WATER FOR CHOCOLATE, “We wanted to achieve an almost black and white feel, very monochromatic with a lot of contrast. SLEEPY HOLLOW is more like a ‘fantastic tale’ not a realistic historical construction and we enhance certain elements to accentuate that quality. The Hammer horrors did it without knowing they were doing it. We’re doing it because we like it.”

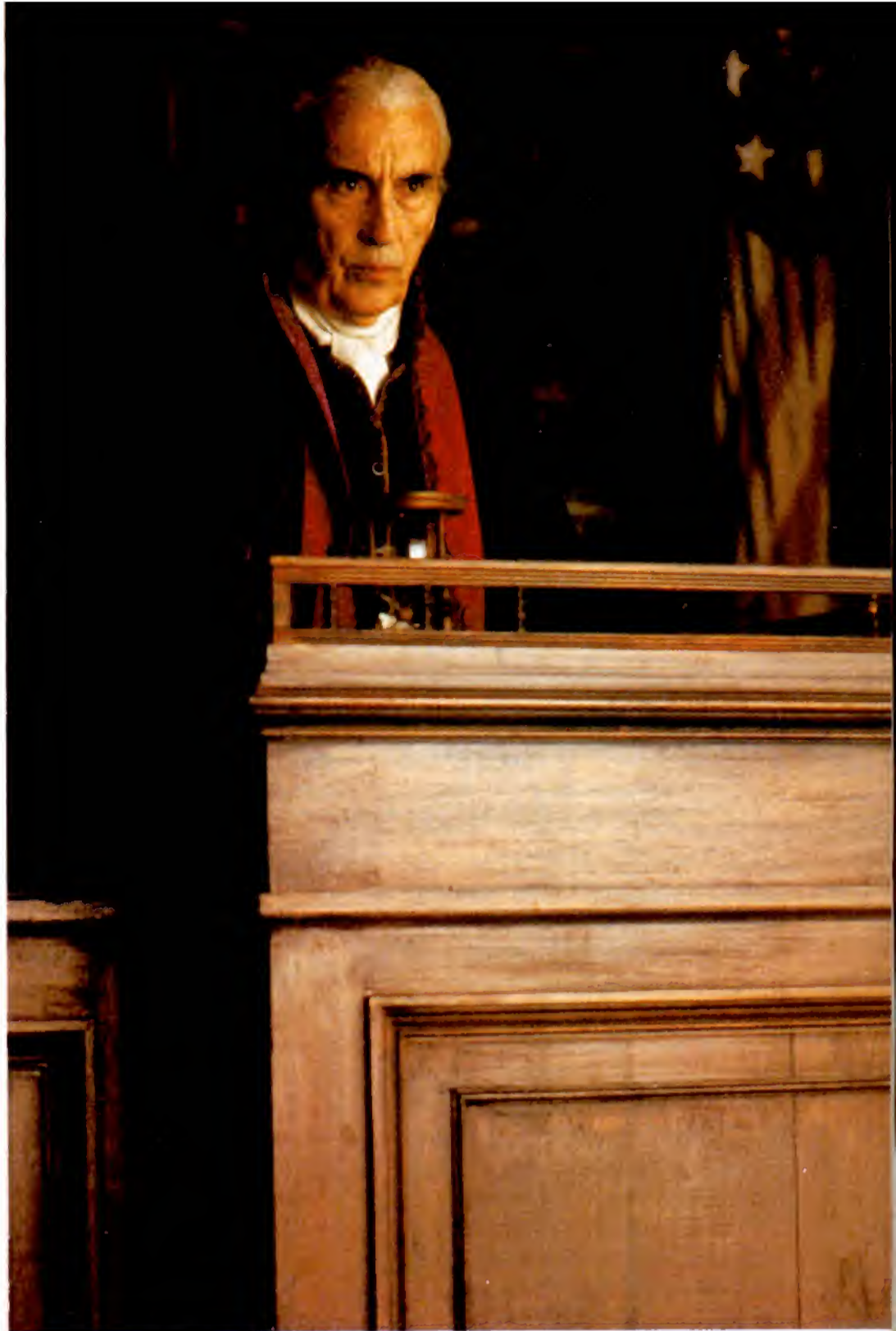
Burton has nothing but praise for Lubezki’s work. “On set Chivo [Lubezki’s nickname] is very intuitive and we are very in sync with each other,” he said. “We talk about Mexican fantasy movies all the time and when the stunt Headless Horseman puts on his blue hood for special effects purposes, it always gets us talking about SANTO wrestling movies. So there’s another homage no one was expecting! Working with Chivo is the most fun I’ve had with anyone in a long time. It wasn’t one particular film of his that made me want to work with him, although A LITTLE PRINCESS was incredibly beautiful. The saturated look we’re aiming for is just a process to try and make the stage work and the locations melt seamlessly together. It’s not that big a deal—just a color filter with a slightly muted quality.”

Burton rehearses a shot with Christina Ricci on the Sleepy Hollow graveyard set at Shepperton Studios where many of the Hammer horrors were filmed.



Principal photography began on SLEEPY HOLLOW on November 20, 1998 and finished in April, 1999. The first scene was shot on the elegant Van Tassel manor house set at Leavesden and dealt with Ichabod arriving in Sleepy Hollow just as the villagers have gathered for their annual Harvest Festival. “Sleepy Hollow is a farming community,” explained Burton, “but there’s something about the town that’s a little off. There’s a sleepiness to the whole valley and a strangeness to the culture. It’s almost as if they’re caught in a dream.”

Burton introduces the atmospheric town of Sleepy Hollow to the audience in a long shot as Ichabod arrives at its cemetery gates. He laughed, “And I’m sure most people will think it’s a model shot because it won’t look real. But it truly is. I know the way forward seems to be digital backdrops and computer graphic special effects. Okay, they are amazing, it’s an interesting technology and they have their place to be sure. But in Mario Bava’s films you felt like you were there in these eerie places. That’s what’s important to me in SLEEPY HOLLOW. I want the definite feeling of being stage bound—therefore



Hammer horror star Christopher Lee in his cameo as the New York magistrate who puts Ichabod Crane on the case of the mysterious Headless Horseman.

earthbound—and in a world that’s real and present even though it isn’t really. Control-wise that sense of real unreality has been a painful nightmare to achieve because of the weather. We always wanted it to rain and be overcast and was told the best month in the United Kingdom for that would be February. Great, we thought, then the sun kept shining through! To see real people in a properly constructed environment is something computers still can’t successfully put across.”

One of the key elements to the Sleepy Hollow set is contained in a plastic tubing system that completely encircled the whole impressive construct. Smoke and mist were pumped through the pipes which escaped through measured holes to descend into the valley creat-

ing an appropriately eerie atmosphere. Often unexpected winds would carry the smoke three miles away and the whole operation would have to be reset. But this time-consuming procedure was crucial to Burton’s SLEEPY HOLLOW vision. “It’s just so wonderful to be able to make a location look like a stage as well,” he said. “All the great Hammer films had that look and that’s why I went to great lengths to emulate it. Trying to make exteriors look like stages and vice-versa has been a lot of fun and one of the reasons why SLEEPY HOLLOW has such a unique look.”

Though makeup designer Kevin Yagher was more than willing to give up the directing reigns to Burton, he made sure he still got to do the film’s deliciously grisly makeup effects

# Sleepy Hollow

## PRODUCTION DESIGN

*Building Burton's poetic horror fairy tale fable.*

By Alan Jones

Paramount wanted to go as far as possible to get the SLEEPY HOLLOW look right and production designer Rick Heinrichs was given *carte blanche* to construct the town he wanted on the wildlife reserve known as Lime Tree Valley on the Hambledon Estate. "One of the most important buildings it was vital to have was the Covered Bridge over a stream," said Heinrichs. "In the original Irving story, the bridge served as the boundary line between the forest where the Headless Horseman hides and the town itself. He can't cross the bridge. Just the character of the Covered Bridge gives you a sense of the age, without being historically accurate, too. There was a duck pond already in the valley with just enough water for me to put in the Mill House and the Covered Bridge. There was never a ques-

tion of creating a CGI river in post-production as Tim was insistent everything be done for real. The one thing I hadn't allowed for was drainage. Because the town was built in this bowl-shaped hollow, every time it rained this raging torrent of water swept down our main street. The clay layer above the chalk basin didn't allow for absorption and I should have made allowances for that."

Scale character models sold the idea of Heinrichs's buildings to Burton. "It allowed me to push stuff around and play with it until we got precisely the look and layout Tim wanted," he said. "The difference between construction techniques in America and the U.K. is they use a lot more tube scaffolding here, yet the whole Sleepy Hollow construct still took 16 weeks to build and we started in September, 1998. The layout of the town was so important because of the

Burton and Depp, with Sleepy Hollow in the background, an entire town constructed on the Lime Tree Valley estate, an hour's drive north of London.



Depp as Ichabod on the set of Sleepy Hollow, an entire 18th century town built by Heinrichs on the Lime Tree Valley estate, north of London, near Marlow.

work. "We had a lot of faces to cast on this show using generic heads," he said. "I would have to check with Tim on the expressions he wanted on each face. I'd get each actor to pose looking scared and Tim would say, 'More fear' or another emotion that best suited their features. It usually amounted to me asking the actors to open their mouths and close their eyes."

The effects-laden fight scene between Ichabod, Brom and the Headless Horseman takes place at the climax of SLEEPY HOLLOW and was filmed on the freezing night of Monday, February 15, 1999. It's Brom's death scene which only a few weeks before had been visualized as a beheading in common with all the other victims. But then Burton decided to cut Brom in half instead. Noted Casper Van Dien, who plays Brom, "I'm one of the few Sleepy Hollow residents who

doesn't lose their head. Tim came up with the new idea, it was no brainstorm on my part."

Since the horseman was added CGI, Van Dien had to get accustomed to special effects shadowboxing. "Most of the time I'm fighting the technology where the other person is taken away so I'm fighting against air," he said. "I have to do the same exact moves with no one there. I have to hit the same marks so they can fit it in with the computer graphics later. We rehearsed this fight for four days and Tim told me not to be too fancy, just smack it. So I did that and it did make Brom look more powerful. Tim is very on top of it all."

"When you work with solid stunt men like our co-ordinator Nick Gillard, that's also beneficial as they can push you to the limit. They see what you can do and they work with you to improve. Nick studied me to see my strengths and then he pushed me further. I didn't use a stunt double for any of the fights, or for any of the horse-riding which amazed Tim because he's never worked with horses before and thought they were a total nightmare."

Although the Brom Van Brunt character's demise was changed from a beheading to a torso-severing at a late stage, Yagher still had to sculpt the head of actor Casper Van Dien to place on top of the mechanics built by special effects su-

The interior of the Tree of Dread, the Horseman's resting place, a gateway between this world and the next.







Depp exhumes one of the Horseman's victims on a Sleepy Hollow cemetery set, part of the impressive Western Woods constructed at Shepperton Studios.

**“A royal entourage drove by on their way to shoot pheasants,” said Heinrichs. “As they looked out their windows, they gasped at the sight of the town.”**

this enchanted forest to give it a spooky and menacing feel.

The centerpiece of the forest is the Tree of the Dead, the Headless Horseman's resting place, which Heinrichs designed to be “like agony captured in wood sculpture.” He continued, “The shadows had to fall a certain way to create a Grimm-like fairy tale feeling. For this set I looked at everything from THE COMPANY OF WOLVES and REVOLUTION to THE WIZARD OF OZ and INVADERS FROM

ble Crane in New York trying to deal with the backward mentality of the officials in charge. He's an early Sam Spade and the jail architecture is our CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF interpretation of it.”

Part of Heinrichs's brief on SLEEPY HOLLOW was to keep revamping the sets into other variations. An example was how some of the Western Woods sculpts were used to create the Forest Fields set representing the border of the woods. “Getting the perspectives right was my main concern at first. Did all the blades of grass diminish into the distance correctly? Stuff like that. Then I realized there was no way the camera was ever going to pick details like that up so I became more relaxed about it. I do feel we've all approached SLEEPY HOLLOW as some enormous life-size stop-motion animation feature because it's a conglomeration of so many different techniques.”

Heinrichs is justifiably proud of his main Sleepy Hollow set. It is an extraordinary construct and walking through it evokes numerous memories ranging between Hammer horror, “Hansel and Gretel” and EDWARD SCISSORHANDS.

He shrugged, “About a month ago a Royal entourage drove through on their way to shoot pheasants and when they looked out of their windows they all gasped at the sight of the town. It's a shame they can't keep it standing as a tourist attraction as I'd pay ten bucks to see it. But that's not possible even though the owner of the estate has looked into it and may be able to get planning permission to retain the Church. Does it bother me that I built something so beautiful only to watch it be destroyed? Of course, but that's the movies, and at least it will be on film for all time.” □

lighting aspects. Sleepy Hollow is laid out the way it is to give as many options for shooting angles as possible without any trucks getting in the way or seeing the artifice at any point. For example, the lighting [director of photography] Chivo [Lubezki] needed meant generators and huge cranes with banks of soft-fill lights on top of them. They were monstrous yet they were the only way to make the exteriors and interiors look similar and creepy. No sunlight ever gets into Sleepy Hollow!”

Heinrichs put the Blacksmiths on legs so Burton could shoot through it for some amazing Sleepy Hollow angles. Four of the main buildings were also built with interiors while the rest had partial interiors, or platforms, for action in windows. He also axed the idea of building the full-scale Windmill in a windy spot for reasons of impending danger, opting to build the interior, the base, the rooftop, a miniature and the burned-out ruin back at Leavesden instead. Noted Heinrichs, “The Windmill will probably be one of the few CGIs we will have on the show because of that decision. The Sleepy Hollow shot Tim knew was critical was the audience's first view of the town. So we had to build these cemetery gateposts—little columns with deer



heads perched on top of them—for Johnny Depp to pass through as he entered the place.”

Shooting took place on the Sleepy Hollow exterior for a month—a quarter of the shooting schedule. Everything else was shot entirely on interior stages at either Leavesden or Shepperton and presented Heinrichs with additional challenges. The Western Woods, situated on the outskirts of Sleepy Hollow, were built at Shepperton where 30-foot tall trees constructed of fiberglass and steel were made from moulds of oak trees from nearby Windsor Great Park. Real branches were supplied by Palm Brokers and gathered under the supervision from the forestry department. More than 70 craftsmen sculpted

MARS. I did piles of research to get the Tree of the Dead look absolutely right and with the exact amount of stylized theatricality as in the old Hammer horrors like DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE. I've never been a fan of that stuff myself. It's too kitschy and melodramatic for me. So I preferred looking at the apple trees in THE WIZARD OF OZ and at Gustav Dore and Arthur Rackham illustrations for my influences.”

Other studio constructs included the Van Tassel Estate, Young Ichabod's dream cottage for a major daydream sequence, and the New York City Jail where Ichabod is first introduced. Noted Heinrichs, “When the movie opens you see consta-



Depp as Ichabod, tracking the horseman to his lair, a bleeding Tree of Dread, a 30-foot-tall fiberglass construct, the centerpiece of the Western Woods set.

pervisor Joss Williams. Yagher added, "We ended up doing this quick fiberglass head because it didn't matter too much about detail because we were seeing the effect from a distance. We still cast Casper's head properly though. Casper wouldn't stop moving or talking. But I'd dealt with him on *STARSHIP TROOPERS* already so it wasn't a problem. It's the claustrophobia that gets to most people when they have their head cast."

When the Headless Horseman actually beheads a victim in *SLEEPY HOLLOW*, he uses a supernatural blade and the force behind it cauterizes the neck wound. That meant little recourse to blood and gore effects for Yagher. But to ring the changes on the continuous beheadings, Yagher and his team

Horror staple Michael Gough, Alfred the Butler in Burton's *BATMAN*, as a ominous Sleepy Hollow townsman.



did come up with a new spin on the action. "It got to the point where we wanted to sever at least one victim's head in a different way," he said. "The character—I can't tell you who—gets his/her head cut off and it ends up spinning around a few times before flopping over. So we had to build a head-spinning rig. The Headless Horseman's sword is digital in this effect; it slices through our rig and the head spins six times before collapsing."

"I feel we've created the most realistic decapitations ever on the screen—better than in *BLACK RAIN* or *THE EXTERMINATOR*. Everyone knows you can't hold on this type of effect normally, but I feel we're on safe ground with these."

Yagher's 20-man crew took over *THE PHANTOM MENACE* prop room at Leavesden for their workshop area. How has he liked working in Britain for the first time? "Apart from it being freezing, you mean! I've obviously gotten spoiled in Los Angeles because there you have a multitude of people to pick from. It's a smaller talent pool in the United Kingdom, although I did use some people from Jim Henson's Creature Shop. I've never worked in a studio situation before either, as I have my own freelance shop in L.A. (KYPI—Kevin Yagher

**"We wanted to sever at least one victim's head in a different way," said makeup designer Kevin Yagher. "So we had to build a head-spinning effects rig."**

Productions Inc.) and it has its good and bad points.

"Here, you can go down to the production office at any time and actors can stop by for a fitting. It's very convenient. The downside is you can't shut your doors to anyone. Also when we needed something special it has had to be shipped in from the States, like silicones, foam and some urethanes, although Britain does have superior fiberglass."

Having people around him who knew exactly what he was aiming for was a great relief to Burton. And producer Adam Schroeder understood exactly where his director was coming from. "Some of my all-time favorite films are Hammer horrors from the past," said Schroeder. "When I was working at Warner Bros., I was involved in plans to remake some of them. It was a shame it didn't happen and the company involved didn't follow through. Sometimes you should leave well enough alone but there were a few lesser known Hammers that would have been perfect for new versions. When Tim told me *SLEEPY HOLLOW* was his homage to Hammer I thought the notion was a brilliant one. Hammer movies took you away from reality in the best kind of

way and I know *SLEEPY HOLLOW* is on the same high-grade course to do just that."

**A**lthough Schroeder readily acknowledged the recent resurgence in the horror genre thanks to *SCREAM*, he believes *SLEEPY HOLLOW* represents the next step in the natural progression of the cycle. "SCREAM cash-ins have been hurting the genre, what with stupid teens and senseless murders," he said. "SLEEPY HOLLOW is taking all that a major step above the norm. It's an old-fashioned Hollywood movie but it's also incredibly scary and thrilling. It won't be gratuitous or gory just genuinely terrifying because it puts people you care about into these horrendous situations. What Tim is terrific at doing—and it's a through-line in all his films—is putting an outsider into extreme circumstances. Add that to the visual splendor of his work and you have a movie for everyone. People want to see what Tim Burton is going to come up with next, because his movies look and feel like nothing else out there—ever. *SLEEPY HOLLOW* is on course to be the best E-ticket Burton film of all." □

Wednesday Addams Grows Up: Christina Ricci co-stars as the bewitching Katrina Van Tassel, conferring on the set with producer Adam Schroeder.



# Sleepy Hollow

## CASPER VAN DIEN

*The star of TARZAN and STARSHIP TROOPERS on playing Brom Van Brunt, Ichabod Crane's rival.*

By Alan Jones

STARSHIP TROOPERS star Casper Van Dien plays Brom Van Brunt in SLEEPY HOLLOW, Ichabod's rival for the affections of Katrina Van Tassel. It was a project Van Dien wanted to be in solely because of director Tim Burton. Noted Van Dien, "Directors like Tim are so few and far between, so intense, with such a great body of work."

Van Dien put on 20 pounds to play the part. "Brom Bones in the novel is barrel-chested and I wanted to be as big as I could," said Van Dien. "I ate specific food groups like I did on TARZAN AND THE LOST CITY and I worked out as hard as I could so that I could be a lot stronger than in any of my other movies. Physical endurance and strength training has been very beneficial for me in this role especially in the sequence I've just filmed where Johnny and I are fighting the Headless Horseman at the Covered Bridge."

Prior to filming SLEEPY HOLLOW, Van Dien appeared in the stylish vampire movie REVENANT/MODERN VAMPIRES. As that was directed by Richard Elfman, Danny Elfman's brother and favored Burton composer, did it help his casting cause to be in the family fold, so to speak? "Danny got a tape to Tim which may have helped, I guess," said Van Dien. "Every little bit helps in this business. I think what did it really was talking about the history of my family," continued Van Dien. "I grew up in New Jersey, right around the corner from where the SLEEPY HOLLOW story supposedly happened. My family came over to America in the



Van Dien as Van Brunt, adding 20 pounds to beef up for the novel's barrel-chested Brom Bones and fulfill an ambition to work for director Tim Burton.

1600s and heard all these Dutch stories that were so widespread in Washington. I grew up knowing the stories but not to the extent my father did. Also, supposedly, I'm actually related to the Van Tassels, one of whom is my love interest in this movie."

To prepare himself for his role, Van Dien steeped himself in SLEEPY HOLLOW culture. "I saw all the other versions of THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW," he said. "I read the novel again and got four different copies of it because I was told it existed in many versions. Frankly they were all more or less the same but they all had such great vocabulary. It's very intense the way Washington Irving wrote—you look at it and are amazed at what common speech for children was back then. If you read it to kids now they'd be acutely puzzled. Seriously though, my main research came from my father and his Van Tassel stories from the past. Sadly, there was no family leg-end I could hook into or any-

thing..."

Working with Tim Burton has been an absolute joy, according to the star who played '50s teen idol James Dean on screen in two TV movies: JAMES DEAN & ME and JAMES DEAN: RACE WITH DESTINY. Noted Van Dien, "Tim is one of the nicest people I've ever met—he's a nice director too. I have never seen him raise his voice—he's calm, everything just goes along fine. He's having fun and enjoying it himself. He's not stressed, a really solid director. A very genuine character. I went in and talked about Brom and he liked the way I was approaching the part. When we are working he comes over and says, 'That was great, I like that, now try it this way.' He gives me lots of options. It's a great way to work because he challenges you to grow and challenges you to keep putting in new things. You do your work beforehand, process everything you want to do, do your notes, write everything out, study, get on set pre-

pared and then he'll challenge you to go yet another step. That's great and that seems a common trait with all the best directors. Paul Verhoeven was the same on STARSHIP TROOPERS. He made me do different stuff and after I had left the set it was, 'Wow, he made me better.' To know that is cool."

Noted Van Dien, "Tim likes a family atmosphere on set. You look over there and see Michael Gough from BATMAN and the sound man from one of his other movies. Then you see Jeffrey Jones from ED WOOD and Johnny Depp, of course—and that's amazing, very nurturing and very nice. Paul Verhoeven did that too, so I think it might just be something great directors do. It also shows great mutual respect for the people involved. They want to come back and he wants them to. I hope I can become part of the Burton family."

Ichabod and Brom may not be the best of friends in SLEEPY HOLLOW, but that didn't mean Depp and Van Dien didn't talk to each other on set or keep their distance. Van Dien remarked, "Johnny is nothing like the Ichabod in the novella; tall and lanky with a big nose, big ears and very skinny. He is so professional. He comes in and does his stuff, then he snaps out of it. Some actors like to stay in character but he doesn't have to and neither do I. He's very generous and giving, but he's also keeping to himself too. He didn't want us to be the best of enemies or anything like that."

"I had a lot of respect for him beforehand and now that's increased. I really appreciate the choices he's made as an actor." □

# BATS

By Dan Scapperotti

The pace is slow and little happens in the small Texas town of Gallup. And Sheriff Emmett Kimsey likes it that way. Suddenly, the ordinary life of the rural community is shattered by strange nocturnal attacks by swarms of bats. Destination Films launches its first feature **BATS** October 22. Lou Diamond Phillips stars as the harassed local lawman who teams up with zoologist Dr. Sheila Casper, played by Dina Meyer, to combat the vicious sorties of the winged mammals.

"I never did a film in this vein except maybe **FIRST POWER** years ago," said Phillips, explaining what drew him to the project, "but that was a little more gothic, supernatural horror. This one felt like a ride for me. It was a lot more fun because it wasn't as dark. I'm from Texas and I've never played a Texan. I thought I could have a lot of fun with this cowboy hat-wearing, boot-wearing guy. It reminded me of **BIRDS** and **JAWS**. It reminded me of a lot of films that I like. I thought **BATS** could be really scary and knowing that it was coming out at Halloween was the nail in the coffin if you'll pardon the expression." The actor's concerns over the release date stem from his experience with MGM's yet unreleased **SUPERNOVA** in which he stars. The film was filmed over a year ago and still remains on the shelf.

"There's a lot of my dad, to be honest, in Emmett Kimsey," said Phillips of his role. "He's like a lot of guys from Texas that I know. They have a sort of wry cynicism, show-me kind of thing. A lot of the ad libs that I have in the film and a lot of the little Texas colloquialisms come straight from my dad who stills live south of Corpus Christi. For me that was a lot of fun. To play this guy who'll say things like, 'Tell me again. Bats? Bats are attacking my town? Genetically mutated bats attacking my town?' He's a guy who is basically the everyman in the middle of this maelstrom surrounded by the experts, but at the end of the day he shows that he's got real roll-up-your-sleeves kind of gumption."

In a film about killer bats you can be sure there are going to be major effects sequences. "One set piece that's going to be

## Lou Diamond Phillips on playing a riff on Hitchcock's **BIRDS**.



The killer bats are courtesy of the KNB Efx Group, with CGI by Netter Digital. The horror film opens from Destination Films October 22, primed for Halloween.

compared to **THE BIRDS**," said the actor, "is when the town of Gallup gets inundated by millions of bats and there is all sorts of havoc wreaked in the streets by these creatures. There's also a lot of really wonderful little suspense vignettes built into all of the destruction. Director Louis Morneau and producers Steve Stabler and Brad Jenkel always looked with a careful eye toward that. They wanted to balance this slam-bang action approach with some creepy suspenseful scary moments which I'm actually thrilled about.

"There are some other set pieces as well. There's a great first attack that really hooked me when I read the script when myself and Dina Meyer are trapped in a Bronco literally covered in bats. We're trying to block the vents and the windows and every other place where these bats can worm their way in. When I first read that I thought 'That's scary.' It reminded me a little bit of the Lee Remick baboon scene in **THE OMEN** where she's trapped and these primal vicious things are coming in the windows at her."

Most of the production required night shooting which demanded that the cast and

crew reset their internal clocks. "What a pain in the butt that was," laughed Phillips. "There are a number of scenes which take place during the day where we are preparing to be attacked at night. There was so much of it that takes place at night that we ended up shooting two or three hours in the late afternoon and then most of the night every day for nine weeks. That just messes with your system, man. It's an unnatural way to be but it created a great glazed-over look for all of us."

The film's visual effects are being provided by Netter Digital, while the puppets and makeup effects are the domain of KNB Effects. "They are using every trick in the book," the actor said, discussing the effects required to bring the winged demons to life on screen. "They were using everything at their disposal to make these bats work. It's sort of amazing. They've come up with a number of mechanical bats. Bats that did everything; big bat heads for close ups, bat puppets that crawl, mechanical bats whose wings flap and they could fly, bats on a stick. Then

there were what we started calling 'the roasted chickens,' because they were the bats with their wings curled that would just sit but if you put enough of them out there they're frightening looking. All of this is enhanced by the CGI. They're really, really creepy."

Phillips found the role both physically and mentally challenging. "As an actor you have to commit to keeping your performance based in some kind of reality while this sort of over-the-top action was going on," he explained.

"You have to commit to that because we weren't playing it campy in the least. It wasn't supposed to be winking at the audience. There are some very, very funny moments in this movie but they come out of the character's disbelief of being in these situations and, I think, a real wry '90s cynicism. It was physically demanding. We ran down silver mines and ran through cow pastures and ran through sheep fields. We were running our asses off. It's not enough that you have to run, you have to pretend to be running away from bats. At three o'clock in the morning when it's really cold and you're stepping in cow pies it ain't glam-



Phillips finds himself surrounded. The actor patterned his Texas policeman Emmett Kimsey after his father and his memories of growing up in Corpus Christi. "He has a sort of wry cynicism," said Phillips.

orous."

Co-starring with Phillips is actress Dina Meyer, no stranger to the genre herself having appeared in *DRAGONHEART* and *JOHNNY MNEMONIC*, as well as a big budget sci-fi epic. "She's a real trooper not just a *STARSHIP TROOPER*," laughed Phillips at his own quip. "She brought a lot to the party. First of all, she's beautiful and has this real intelligence as an actress. You buy it. There were many times when she reminded me of Linda Hamilton in the *TERMINATOR* films or Sigourney Weaver in the *ALIEN* films where you just sort of bought how tough she is and yet how smart she is. I think that's a great mix. That's the kind of thing you need to make this bigger than life scenario come to life.

"We also have Leon [Robinson], who is a very tall, very handsome black actor most recently in the *TEMPTATIONS*. As Jimmy he gives the show a real comic side that he's never shown before. Tall, handsome, remote guy and in this he's really goofy. He had a lot of fun with the role. The guy I'm really thrilled with is Bob Gunton who is Dr. McCabe, our evil mad scientist. He was the bad guy in the second *ACE VENTURA* film, the bad guy in *PATCH ADAMS* and the prison warden in *SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION*. He brings such a legitimacy to that role of the scientist who genetically mutated the bats. That could be so campy or over the top and Bob really did some great things with the role. He made it very idiosyncratic and interesting and at the same time very grounded."

Killer bats are not a new cinematic concept. Mad scientist Bela Lugosi unleashed his own

home-grown variety against his enemies in 1941's *DEVIL BAT. NIGHTWING*, about a horde of bats plaguing the Arizona desert, based on the Martin Cruz Smith novel, was adapted into a film in 1979. "I understand in *LAKE PLACID* it's just there and you accept that this happened," said Phillips discussing the lack of explanation for terror elements in some films. "This one crosses the T's and dots the I's. You get a great sense of how it happened and why it happened and what we're going to do about it. In that respect I think it's a well thought-out film. There are those aspects of it that are a bit stock and a bit formulaic, but that's just because so many successful films in this genre have come before it. I think it does it in its own style and its own way which I think is cool."

The actors had to descend 1500 feet into an old mine for the sequences where they are tracking the bats to their lair. While the den itself was a massive set, the tunnels and ancillary corridors were real. "There is this incredible sequence which looks like something out of *ALIENS*," said Phillips. "When

In one of the film's most effective horror set-pieces, Phillips and co-star Dina Meyer find themselves trapped in a Bronco, inundated by the killer bats.



**"It was a physically demanding role. We ran our asses off. At three in the morning when you're stepping in cow pies it ain't glamorous."**

—Lou Diamond Phillips—

I saw the dailies I thought 'Wow, nobody is going to expect something like this in this flick.' Speaking to the smartness of the script, Dina Meyer and I have to don these space suits with huge oxygen tanks and go deep down into this mine where the bats are hiding out. The reason why we have to wear these suit is that the ammonia levels are so high you can asphyxiate on bat guano down below the surface and it gives this sort of spacey, surreal look to the film. It goes beyond *THE BIRDS* in that it has this sort of hi-tech look to it and that certainly brings it into the '90s and also gives it this otherworldly, creepy look. It was a pain in the butt to do, but was to the benefit of the film and the whole look and feel of it. It's just really neat. When I read the script I thought if they just shoot the script and make a few scary sequences this movie will work and people will respond to it. What Louis Morneau and our director of photography, George Mooradian, brought to it was this great style, this great sense of pace. We shot it wide screen so it has this big look to it. You get these big, wide sort of West Texas vistas. This cavernous view in the mine. It looks like no other film in this genre that I've seen and I think that's something that audiences will respond to."

Before he decided to fight bats in the American Southwest, Phillips took a voyage into space. The actor, however, is disappointed over the controversy and infighting that has held up the release of director Walter Hill's *SUPERNOVA*. Speculation swirls around the Hill film, now scheduled to be released early next year. The director had his name removed from the credits. "I've heard all sorts of things about what is happening," said Phillips. "The latest rumor, which I think is very cool, is that Francis Ford Coppola is cutting it. He's on the board of MGM; he's being made one of the executives. I heard from a very good source that he is personally cutting it up in San Francisco. It's gone through a couple of different incarnations. I'm not sure what happened to it. I think everyone is trying to help the script evolve." □

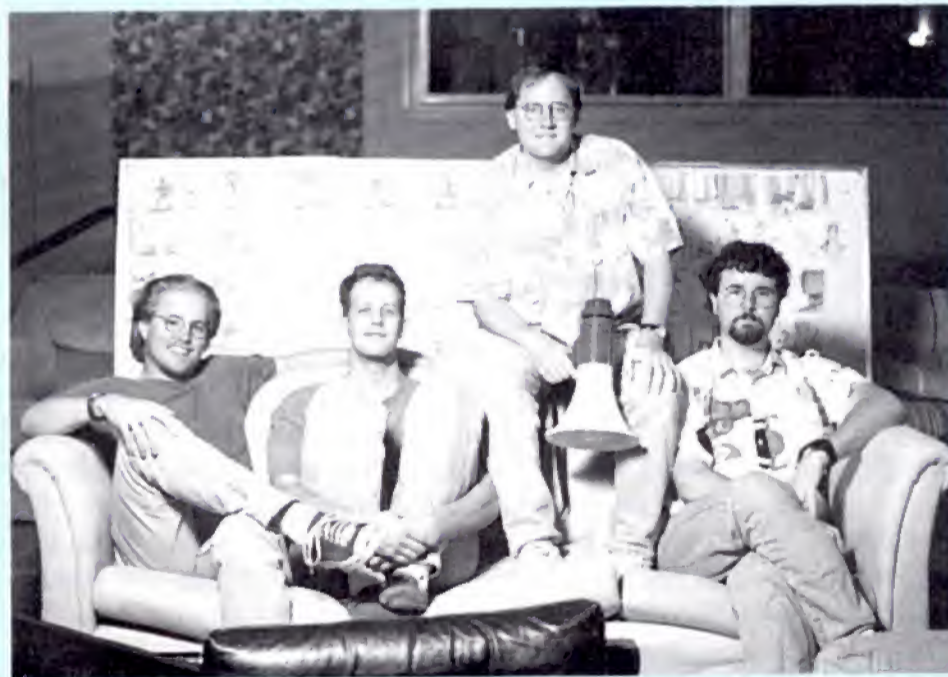
# TOY STORY 2

By Lawrence French

The Toys are back in Town! Pixar and Disney will once again be bringing Buzz Lightyear, Woody and all of their toy cohorts back to the screen in the highly anticipated sequel, TOY STORY 2, which opens at theaters on November 26th. John Lasseter, TOY STORY's original director is once again at the helm and promises that this new installment will be a successor worthy of the original. "I looked at the history of sequels," said Lasseter, "and found that a lot of them are virtually a retelling of the same story, with the same people, and what's the point to that?" Of course, the obvious answer is to make more money for the studio, regardless of whether the new film reaches the quality of the first. However, that's a trap Lasseter wanted to avoid. Yet, strangely enough, it looked for a brief time anyway, that TOY STORY 2 might have been headed in just that direction, because Disney had initially scheduled it to be a direct-to-video title. But, as Lasseter explains, "At Pixar, we don't do anything halfway."

And since the rough story outline was showing such great possibilities, Lasseter noted, "almost from the beginning, everybody was saying, 'why not just make it into a theatrical feature?' It had great potential to be as good as the original movie and when I look at the great sequels, like THE GODFATHER PART II, or THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK, they may not be better, but they're equal to the original." Amazingly, even as a direct-to-video title, Tom Hanks, Tim Allen and all the original cast members quickly agreed to reprise their

## John Lasseter on directing Pixar's CGI 'toon fantasy sequel.



Lasseter with his Pixar story team braintrust (l to r): board artist Andrew Stanton, supervising animator Pete Docter, and board artist Joe Ranft.

vocal characterizations for the new film, feeling that the story had depth and numerous possibilities for great acting, adding yet another indication that a theatrical release was the best way to proceed.

TOY STORY 2's first treatment was hatched by Pete Docter, the co-screenwriter (and head animator) on the first TOY STORY, along with John Lasseter. One of the key ideas for this treatment came out of Lasseter's own toy-filled office at Pixar, which could easily double as a toy museum. "I've got five boys," related Lasseter, "and my kids love coming into

their daddy's office, because they want to play with daddy's toys. Well, many of the toys are very expensive collectibles or they're very old and fragile, so I have a tremendous anxiety about letting my kids play with them. They come running in here and I have a few toys that I can give to them, but with others there's no way they're going to touch them! I thought that this was hilarious, because toys are made to be played with, but the older the toys become, the more valuable they are. It's such an irony, because an older toy becomes this valued object and if a child plays with it, it

loses its value. So out of that, Pete Docter and I got the basic idea of a back story for Woody, which is that he's a spin-off toy from an old '50s TV show called WOODY'S ROUND-UP. It's a kind of Hopalong Cassidy or Howdy Doody type of show. It's this wonderful retro-'50s western type of thing."

Thus, Woody is a toy that can be either a child's plaything or an extremely valuable collector's item, although Woody is completely unaware of this. And when Woody accidentally ends up in a yard sale, he gets stolen by an obsessive toy collector, Big Al. It's then up to Buzz Lightyear and the rest of the toys from Andy's room to rescue their leader from being put on permanent display in Big Al's penthouse apartment.

For Lasseter, doing a sequel was clearly a joyous opportunity to revisit old friends and expand on the framework established by the original TOY STORY. "For me, it was kind of sad to leave these characters after just one movie," explained Lasseter. "They had so much depth and seemed to be a perfect combination of different personalities. Mr. Potatohead is always questioning authority, Slinky Dog is completely loyal to Woody, Hamm is Mr. Know-it-all, Rex is completely nervous, Bo loves Woody, for his good and his bad. It was like a great sitcom, where the characters are so strong there's really an endless possibility of things you can do with them. And frankly, one of the most difficult things to do is to develop a character's personality and how it fits into the story. I often say, these characters aren't creations, they're employees of Pixar, because they're so alive in our minds. There are still four



Buzz Lightyear flees from obsessive toy collector Big Al in the sequel originally aimed for video, which Disney now opens in theaters November 26.

**“Although these films seem so new, because of our CGI medium,” said Pixar director John Lasseter, “really down at the core they’re pure old Disney.”**

or five new characters we’ve had to develop, but it was so much fun not having to worry about the others. It allowed us to concentrate on the story, without having to worry about developing new personalities.”

Among the newest technical challenges for the Pixar crew, was the task of creating human characters, like Big Al (voiced by Wayne Knight). Humans have traditionally been a weak point in CGI, but the technology since the first TOY STORY has vastly improved. Co-producer Karen Robert Jackson marveled at the level of detail present in Big Al.

“The first time you see him, he’s lying down on a couch, breathing,” explained Jackson, and the level of detail you see in his face is just phenomenal. You see the pores, the stubble on his chin and his nose hairs. The quality of the animation and the movement of the muscles, along with the texture of his face is really extraordinary.”

Interestingly enough, Lasseter was adamant that, despite the huge leaps CGI technology has taken since the first TOY STORY, he didn’t want to make the gap between the two films too obvious. “I analyzed in my mind all the different aspects that we were adding to TOY STORY,” said Lasseter. “The story, the characters, the music, the lighting and art direction. All those things that make up what people loved about TOY

STORY. So in doing this one, I said, ‘we have to respect every single aspect of the original.’ People are going to want to see the world that these toys inhabited from the first movie, and when you compare them side by side, they do look different; but when people watch it, there’s no question that it’s a TOY STORY world. And with our computer technology, we had access to all of the models, the houses, the cars, everything that we created for the original. Some of that we advanced, because we had the newer technology, but a lot of it we just left alone.”

One of the important new characters introduced in TOY STORY 2 is Jesse, a cowgirl counterpart to Woody who also comes from the WOODY’S

ROUND-UP television show. She’s a sort of Dale Evans to Woody’s Roy Rogers. Woody first discovers her on Big Al’s collector’s shelf, where she has been sitting unloved and ignored for some time. But Jesse still fondly remembers her previous owner, Emily, who eventually out-grew her. “Jesse is such a great character,” said co-producer Helene Plotkin, “because she’s so vivid and has such emotional swings. The animators were all fighting over who would animate her, and even in the early layout stages, we showed a layout reel to Sarah McLachlan, who sings Jesse’s song, [called “When She Loved Me,” written by Randy Newman], and Sarah was very teary-eyed. This was still a very rough layout reel, and Sarah got it emotionally. You know something is working when someone can watch layout reels and still get emotionally caught up in it. It’s a pivotal point in the film, because it conveys what it’s like to be played with as a toy and then to be abandoned and forgotten. The song takes you from the time Emily was still playing with Jesse and they were best friends, until when Emily started to get older and

all of a sudden Jesse was discarded and forgotten. Jesse’s not changing, but Emily is, so the theme is basically that kids grow up and don’t play with their toys anymore.”

Lasseter points out that Jesse’s song is a fundamental Disney moment. “It’s like Walt once said, for every laugh there should be a tear and for every tear a laugh,” stated Lasseter. “That notion of heart and pathos helped bring these characters up to another level. It’s such a classic Disney aspect, and although these films seem so new, because of our CGI medium, really down at the core, they’re pure old Disney. Randy Newman wrote a line in Jesse’s song, which is so great, ‘I stayed the same, but she started drifting away,’ and you know, there’s no turning back. I said to Randy, ‘You know, this song does not have a happy ending.’ Jesse’s heart gets broken and we have a tragic story, because that’s something that happens to toys. I think a lot of people will be surprised with TOY STORY 2, because it has a lot of depth and texture to it, and people will come away from it, not having expected that. I’m really proud about the underlying emotion and themes of this film.” □

Buzz and Woody, again voiced by Tim Allen and Tom Hanks, and the CGI cast of both new and familiar faces.



# JAMES BOND PIERCE BROSNAN

**Back and in control as 007 in  
THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH.**

*By Alan Jones*

The 19th official James Bond adventure began shooting on Monday January 11, 1999, at Pinewood Studios in London, the traditional home of the 007 movies and where the large sound stage bearing the most famous secret agent in the world's license number still stands. Directed by Michael (GORILLAS IN THE MIST) Apted, THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH cost over \$110 million and headlines



also on hand as Q's assistant R in his first Bond appearance as a probable Q successor.

Produced by Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli, who carry on the family tradition founded by the late Albert R. "Cubby" Broccoli 37 years ago with DR. NO, THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is based on a script by Neil Purvis and Robert Wade who also co-wrote the British true crime thriller LET HIM HAVE IT in 1991. Purvis recently co-wrote the Rob-







PIERCE BROSNAN

**“THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is a lot more coherent than the last outing which was—to use an English expression—kick, bollock and scramble.”**

good film and it did well. I was pleased, of course, because it was my second one. Third time around it's more comfortable, more relaxed, and I'm more confident and more assured with myself. I have a great director in Michael Apted, who's very good on stuff like character and story. He's done so many different films and is such a diverse man, so he's probably not the obvious choice for a Bond movie.”

So why Apted exactly then? Brosnan exclaimed, “Because I protested loudly enough to say I wanted more character. I wanted more of the relationship between Bond and whoever he's with, whether it be with M or the leading lady. I was anxious to have more acting grist to the mill, so to speak. TOMORROW NEVER DIES was wall-to-wall action. Fair enough. But here we have a story you can sustain throughout the action sequences—you have a goal, you have an emotional subtext to it within the Bond universe. THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is an effort to get back to the old Bond movies that weren't so completely overshadowed by pyrotechnics. I think we have a

good balance of character, narrative and plot with all the bells and whistles people love. We have babes. Bond is not crying, nor is he going into therapy! It's just one man, his gun and a license to kill. Terrific!” Continued Brosnan, “I sat in with the writers and Apted and gave my opinions. It was nothing specific, just that there had to be more meaningful character above whatever mission he was going to be involved in. In the situation here, Bond feels somewhat at fault over the demise of Sir Robert King in the beginning. So he goes to protect his daughter Elektra to find out what's going on and in doing so gets emotionally involved with her. Then the world turns...What he thought was true, and who he thought he was chasing turns out not to be the real culprit but someone else entirely. For once there's this sense of doubt in the Bond character, that he might be in over his head. It's a premise that lends itself to exciting scenes with nuance and subtext.”

The main difference for Brosnan in THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is the clear maturity of the Bond character.

Brosnan with co-stars Sophie Marceau as romantic interest Elektra King, and Denise Richards as Dr. Christmas Jones. Below: Into the fray with Richards.





Deadly face off: Brosnan as Bond, with Robert Carlyle as Renard, a terrorist who sees the key to world domination in the oil pipelines of Azerbaijan.

"There's more confidence on my part because of having two Bonds under my belt now," he said. "I've been in front of the camera for over 18 months flat-out. I've made GREY OWL with director Richard Attenborough and THE THOMAS CROWN AFFAIR with John McTiernan and it only enhances one's work. I come into this with a freedom and knowledge that I don't have to prove myself in the 007 role anymore and that's a good feeling.

"I was speaking to [composer] David Arnold on the set the other day. He's a real Bond aficionado and he thinks THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is very different from all the other Bond movies."

Part of the reason why Brosnan feels THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH is going to score high points with Bond watchers is because he's playing off some great actors in this episode. "Robert Carlyle is the best guy," said Brosnan. "He really knows

what Renard is all about and he's bringing a great sense of style to his acting with a performance that comes with so much built-in aggression and menace. He's wonderful and there's so much more of a reality to the situation as opposed to some namby-pamby bad guy. His performance is a great challenge and it brings your own one up, no question about that. When you work with people who are so talented and so on the edge, it can't fail to do

that. It enhances what you do in the Bond world.

"Sophie Marceau is a fantastic actress and a movie star in her own right so we're on an equal footing. Robbie Coltrane is back. Dame Judi, too. Bond movies are an attractive proposition for good calibre actors now and I take that as a compliment to myself. Many fine actors wanted to be in this. That does not go unnoticed. I can't tell you how very secure I feel

with this one."

Making every Bond film is a mix of excitement, challenge and chore for Brosnan. "It feels like we've had six weeks left to shoot now for the past six months. We're on week 18 and I've been counting since the first one, I can assure you!"

And for the past few days Brosnan has been swimming after a submarine for one particular stunt sequence set in the Caspian Sea. He sighed, "It's been pretty tough going. Bond is such a physically demanding role because I do like to do as many stunts as possible whether it's being chased by a fireball or driving a one-man speedboat 70mph down the Thames. What you mostly see is me and when you do that sort of work for 25 weeks you come out the other end fairly hammered and bruised after giving your all to it.

"You have to keep fit. I am supposed to adhere to a workout regime which has fallen apart in the last month

Close quarters: Brosnan with Denise Richards as Dr. Christmas Jones, a nuclear weapons expert piloting a mini-sub on reconnaissance through the tunnels of Istanbul.



because of fatigue. I just can't do it. I can't get up at six in the morning and do the workout. Beating myself up isn't part of the job. I'm so tired of the physical part of the job, I'm bone-weary. But that's showbiz. When you know you are making a good film, you carry on. And I know we have a very fine film here because of Apted and the attention that has been paid to the script and the storytelling. That keeps you going."

Added Brosnan, "I'll do action films as long as my body can stand up to the pace. Not even the body, actually, more the desire, really. The heart to do it. It's like watching paint dry making a Bond movie because they are very time-consuming. Once you've done a handful, that endless waiting around can get old very quickly. But I have a contract to do three films with an option for a fourth. The studio has wanted these three Bond movies quite fast because MGM/UA have not been in the greatest of financial shape. If I believe what I read in the press, all they have is us! So they want them at regular intervals and that has been difficult, especially when I've been trying to establish a body of work away from them which will excite me and hopefully give me longevity after the Bond train finally stops."

But that's never going to happen, is it? Eon Productions recently purchased the rights to *CASINO ROYALE* (already made as a pastiche spy caper in 1967), so surely the possibility of actually starring in a true blue Ian Fleming tale is an alluring one? Noted Brosnan, "On paper there's the option of a fourth Bond for me but I don't want to go as quickly off the mark with another as we have the last three. Once this is finished I'd like to take time out, maybe three years, and concentrate on something else. We'll see. I've been going full tilt. The last five years have gone like a flash. You do a movie like Bond and you become 'international' which is wonderful for an actor's career. I want to capitalize on the choices it has given me rather than the shackling aspects of playing a character like this which I was fully aware of."

"I want to take a break from

## PIERCE BROSNAN

**"Part of the joy of Bond is the familiarity. The producers have been very wise over the years. Cubby Broccoli knew he was on to a good thing back in '62 and if it works, don't fix it."**



In his third outing as 007, Brosnan is more confident in steering the series. The title refers to Bond's coat of arms in *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*.

the business for a while. I have other projects with my production company, Irish Dream Time, I want to do. I want to take stock of life, too. My house recently fell down in Malibu so I have to find a new one. I also want to spend time with my wife Keely and my baby. Paint, buy a few vintage cars, and probably get restless. When you work like I have over the past two years, you are running on empty, on adrenaline the whole time. Especially in a Bond film where you're living inside this enclosed universe and the rest of your life falls away. I suppose it's an exciting way to live, but I'm not sure it's healthy, because it's so unreal."

Brosnan said he has been thinking about directing—but not too seriously. "The itch isn't big enough yet for me to want to go out and do it. I'd probably do something small and character-driven. I certainly have no desire to go off and do a *BRAVEHEART*. Certainly not a Bond—they are too hard, too difficult and not fun. I'm not sure if I'd act and direct at the same time either. The one genre I couldn't do is period drama. Because I've pulled off Bond I

do think I have to stay in the here and now rather than Jane Austen-land and do contemporary stuff on a big scale. Commercially, I think I'll only bring people in with action. But then my career has always just unfurled before me. You go on gut instincts, opportunities arise, like playing Bond in the first place. I couldn't do it in 1986 because of *REMYN- TON STEELE* but then it came back into my life completely unexpectedly.

"It has changed my life dramatically and come with a certain amount of drama. One's profile is higher and so you have more intrusion into your life. You deal with the fame factor which is a strange one because this character is known worldwide, so wherever I travel in the world he travels with me. We're joined at the hip in some respects. I enjoy the pleasure the Bonds bring to people and audiences are usually very welcoming when I do get to meet them."

Brosnan noted he never looks over his shoulder to view the Bond baggage of nearly 40 years stretching behind him. "I have no idea where I am in the Bond tradition," he said. "I hate

analyzing like that. I just want to be seen as a very fine Bond. Let the critics and audience make up their minds and let the work speak for itself. The last two films were the most successful ever and we're back on the map with this character. That gives me a great sense of pride. It's a great tradition to be a part of and I'm sure with the advent of these being so successful, when it finally comes time for me to hang up my license, there'll be someone else waiting in the wings to take over.

"Even when that happens, I'm stamped, I'm branded. No getting away from it. I'm forever Bond, whatever part of the scale you put me on. It doesn't matter if I'm better than Roger Moore. If Sean Connery is better than me. If people liked George Lazenby. There is only one guy that matters and it's James Bond. I don't lie awake wanting to be the best Bond. It isn't a burning ambition to be the best there ever was. I don't desire that at all. Am I having a good time? Yes. Am I tired. Yes. Do I love what I'm doing. Yes. Apart from that you get sick of the sight of yourself. You look in the mirror in the morning and want to scream, 'Take that face away from me!' But I'm not complaining, it's just an observation."

*THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* will see James Bond into the 21st century. The opening stunt sequence even ends at the Millennium Dome currently being built in London's East End to celebrate the year 2000. Where does Brosnan see Bond in the 21st century? "Well, he can't change. After 19 movies he's been fairly consistent with the symbolism and the imagery—the gun, the vodka martini, shaken not stirred, the tuxedo. It's a traditional format that has been consistent for all those years. That's part of its success. People go knowing they are going to get an opening sequence hopefully exhilarating and better than the last one. Part of the joy of Bond is the familiarity. I do think the producers have been very shrewd and wise over the years. Cubby Broccoli knew he was on to a good thing back in 1962 and if it works, don't fix it." □

# 007

## THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH

### Michael Apted on directing the nineteenth James Bond epic.

By Alan Jones

Michael Apted thought it was a joke when he got the call about directing the nineteenth James Bond film *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*. The helmer of such acclaimed and successful films as *NELL*, *GORILLAS IN THE MIST* and *COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER* said, "I really was so surprised. But when I realized producers Michael G. Wilson and Barbara Broccoli were being deadly serious, I thought about it and decided I'd be thrilled to bits to take on something like this. At my age, to come into something so totally new, was a fantastic opportunity. To learn the dynamics of such a huge international action blockbuster was very exciting and I suppose it could jump start my career again in a new direction. The film business is very ageist and for me to get a chance like this was absolutely amazing.

"I did hesitate in accepting the offer," continued Apted. "All I kept thinking was, What the hell do they want me for? Then I found out they wanted a better story to go between all the action and someone well-versed in drama to make it pay dividends. They also wanted to do different things with the women in the film, make them



Apted, the acclaimed director of *COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER* was brought into the franchise by Brosnan to beef-up the character dramatics.

more interesting and not just be there for sexual decoration. So it was natural they would come to a director who works in drama, especially ones revolving around women, more than the action genre."

Noted Apted, "At first I was surprised they wanted to make any change to the formula. But their appetite for something new coincided with my views and when I saw what was in the back of their minds, all doubts were removed about my involvement. They knew the action would be in good hands with regulars like second unit director Vic Armstrong and stunt co-ordinator Simon Crane. They've got it down pat, so the action side would take care of itself. It was a daunting

prospect, I won't deny it. There's a lot of expectation that comes with a Bond film which can be intimidating. But going in, my one major worry was could I handle such a scale of movie on a tough 110-day schedule?"

The first job Apted tackled when he came aboard the project was the script. "TOMORROW NEVER DIES was fraught with script problems," said Apted. "Scenes were often being written on the day they were being shot and lots of people clashed on the last one, as I understand it. I didn't want to go through any of that. Writers Neil Purvis and Robert Wade worked on the script for two months after I arrived. Then we brought Dana Stevens in, who had written my movie *BLINK*, to get more character in there and write good dialogue for the women. Bruce Feirstein [the co-writer of *GOLDENEYE* and *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*] then Bond-ized it all and gave the lines more snap. What was good about the writers was they each focused on a different aspect of the script. No one was being asked to come in and rewrite someone else's work. Here we've been rewriting in the best way, i.e. responding to the actors' demands, what was happening within the scene and



Filming Brosnan's skiing closeups.

what was working."

The plot of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* revolves around the cutting-edge issue of Caspian oil and that's why Apted was drawn by the premise. "The story we have in Bond is playing out in front of us at the moment," he said. "It has slowed down somewhat because of the bottom falling out of the oil market but this time last year the papers were full of who was going to have what oil pipelines going through which country in the Caspian area to the West. We are the first film to be dealing with the whole issue and it's great to be doing a Bond that's ahead of the game for a change rather than dealing with old hat intrigues about Russians. I didn't want to recycle what others have done before although it's a kind of high-wire act delivering what the audience expects while not keeping it in a rut. Bond must imperceptibly keep changing to move along."

A lot of the changes that have been occurring in the Bond movies of late are the direct responsibility of Pierce Brosnan, and Apted praises the star for insisting on them and engineering them. "Pierce wants to act rather than roll around a lavish set for two hours being shot at. I can understand that. Every actor wants new challenges and the chance to grow. He was looking to play



For the most part, Apted left the stunt action to the seasoned Bond crews.

#### MICHAEL APTED ON HIS CAST

**“When actors saw I was going to direct, they knew they were going to be looked after and not hung out to dry, playing caricatures. . . . I don’t want glamorous ladies who can’t act.”**

more drama and I have him to thank for this great opportunity. Pierce brings vulnerability, humanity and sensitivity to the Bond role and as an actor he’s more interested in the dramatic scenes. Roger Moore was clearly interested in the comic twinkle possibilities and Sean Connery liked the macho stuff, but that take is rather old-fashioned now.”

Noted Apted, “Pierce wanted a more complex reading of the role which befitted the times. He said to me quite categorically, ‘I want scenes to play. I don’t want to spend five months with guns.’ He’s right. Ian Fleming didn’t just write action; that’s why the series is so successful. Every time a new Bond actor comes into play you can start all over again and expand on their strengths. Bond has lasted this long because each actor brings their own personality to it. While they are all called Bond films they are all different. Connery’s Bond is so different to Moore’s Bond. They aren’t the same person even though they share the same name.”

The whole conceit of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* is the relationship between James Bond and Elektra King. “But if you know any more about it then that’s the end,” remarked Apted. “And if it doesn’t work, I’m up shit creek without a pad-

dle! I’m really happy with what Sophie Marceau is doing. She has decent scenes to play with a certain movement of the character within them and she’s risen to the occasion.

“Robert Carlyle is wonderful too. I’ve always felt Bond is only as good as his villain and we aimed high with Robert even though he’s quite a conventional Bond baddie in many ways.

“I would like to think that I brought my own reputation to the Bond table. When actors saw I was going to direct, they knew they were going to be looked after, and not hung out to dry playing caricatures. Like Dame Judi Dench as M, who gets to be part of the story this time out and even went on location to Istanbul and Azerbaijan rather than sit behind a desk and

mete out orders.”

The care with which Apted is making *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* is evident even down to the cameo casting. For example, the opening stunt sequence filmed along the River Thames in London, around the naval base at Chatham, through an East End market and ending up at the Millennium Dome, features a mysterious woman known as the Cigar Girl. Apted went to Italy to cast this minor but pivotal role and after looking at the likes of home-grown starlets Asia Argento and Claudia Guerrini opted for *IL POSTINO*’s Maria Grazia Cucinotta.

“I didn’t want glamorous ladies in this adventure who couldn’t act,” said Apted. “Maria has a tricky part but I wanted to find a really beautiful actress who could deliver a performance even in such a small role. The studio gave me this huge list of people to consider, but it was all models and that sort of girl. ‘No,’ I told them, ‘You don’t understand, these people have got to give a performance.’ It was no good for me to have some model *du jour* who would then have to be pushed all the way through it. There’s nothing in the rule book that says the beautiful women in the Bond movies can’t be bright

as well as fabulous looking. I have incredibly gorgeous women in *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* who all act smart and say smart things while still delivering the testosterone value people expect.”

Although Apted is English and grew up in the United Kingdom, he has lived in Los Angeles ever since making *COAL MINER’S DAUGHTER* there in 1980. “I wanted a directing career and it seemed to make more sense to go to Hollywood where the work was rather than scramble around in London,” he said. “The irony is I’ve come back home to the biggest production I’ve ever had to handle. And the biggest budget too. This is three times what I had on my last film, *EXTREME MEASURES* with Hugh Grant and Gene Hackman. The size of the crew and the elongated schedule is a whole different world to me. Naturally, it’s a lot slower and even with 100 odd days shooting schedule, everything takes more time because it’s very complicated. Plus three other units are working alongside me. It’s still the same job of bringing 115 pages of script to life, it’s just the conditions are different.”

Noted Apted, “The hardest thing is keeping up with it all; knowing what the other units are doing and not losing control. There’s a lot to keep in your head. For example, here I am directing Pierce falling on a piece of the Millennium Dome we’ve had constructed at Pinewood. He has to roll down it and then hang from a rope. So I can’t be on the Thames looking at how the river chase is going. Creatively, you do give something up. It’s my film but someone else is doing it too and that can be a difficult thing to get your head around. Especially as I’ve never been in that position before. I usually have a second unit for three days. Well,

Bond meets Elektra King (Sophie Marceau). The whole conceit of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* is based on their relationship, a dramatic first for a Bond film.



here the second unit has run from day one. You have to get over it and realize that's how it is in the Bond world. I just make sure I pay attention and don't get caught out."

That's especially true with regards to all the location work that comes as part and parcel of an 007 adventure. *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* has travelled to the Turkish cities of Istanbul and Cappadocia, Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku, the French Alps, the Guggenheim Art Gallery in Spain's Bilbao and Scotland's Eilean Donan Castle in Ross-shire, which became Castle Thane, MI6's center of operations. "You film bits on location and pieces back at Pinewood and then have to put them together in the hope everything has gone okay and they fit," he said. "You never really know until post-production so you keep your antenna alert or you could lose your way."

Apted started his career on television in the documentary arena. His '7 Up', '14 Up' etc. series looking at individuals throughout their entire lives has currently reached the '42 Up' mark on British TV. It was the documentarian in Apted who insisted the Bond production go to Azerbaijan. "When I researched the whole Caspian oil situation, I went to Baku and thought it was the most incredible looking place," he said. "There were some astounding images there of derelict oil fields and phenomenal underground testing areas. For the reality of our story I managed to persuade them to take Bond to Azerbaijan. That perked my interest a great deal and appealed to my documentary roots."

"It's interesting, isn't it?" he continued. "In the old Bonds, the Caribbean was an exotic location, but now you can get any old package tour holiday there. So while it's hard to find action sequences Bond hasn't done before, it's harder still to find a corner of the world no one has seen. Therefore unusual architectural landmarks, like the Millennium Dome, the MI6 building and the Guggenheim, conform to the exotic term now. The studio memo said, 'Make it exotic.' But how do you do that today? You go for the more off-

#### APTED ON KEEPING IT FRESH

**"In the old Bonds, the Caribbean was exotic but now you can get any old tour there. It's hard to find a corner of the world no one's seen. You go for Azerbaijan as opposed to a beach on Fiji."**



At the film's opening, Bond meets the mysterious Cigar Girl (Maria Grazia Cucinotta). Apted insisted on casting solid actors and sought out the Italian *IL POSTINO* star. "I didn't want glamorous ladies who couldn't act," said Apted.



beat location which means Azerbaijan as opposed to a beach in Fiji."

It was one thing accepting the helm of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, but another thing altogether for Apted entering the Bond fold. "I was worried it would be a conservative environment, that they'd put up with me because I was who Pierce wanted," he said. "But that wasn't the dynamic at all. It was a very warm atmosphere. That comes from Cubby and the mantle has been passed to Barbara and Michael. I did wonder what it would be like, as there's generations of baggage involved in a Bond production. I knew I'd either end up wanting to kill everyone or fit right in straight away. Luckily the latter happened. There's a lot of old hands here to support me with all the action demands and I wasn't re-inventing the wheel for myself in that department. I wasn't made to feel an outsider or that they had to bring me up to speed. Looking back, now we're in week 18, the biggest surprise is I'm not tired or worn out from it all. I've still got all my marbles. I've learned such bad habits, though. How can I go back to an ordinary 50-day shoot?"

Although Apted knows directing a Bond movie is something of a low risk factor to some extent, he says he hasn't taken any aspect for granted. "I just hope people like it, they can follow it and I hope it delivers what they expect plus a little more. It's not just *TOMORROW NEVER DIES* all over again. That one did half a billion dollars world wide so *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* has a lot to live up to. You've got to keep up with what's going on around you in the action genre and then tailor it to what people like in Bond. The producers have kept Bond exciting to each new generation for that reason and each director brings something new to it. If the last one was fraught with problems, I can only say this has been plain sailing. There's a definite future for James Bond. People like Pierce and it's the oldest, the most successful and the biggest franchise ever. If anything, it's only showing signs of getting even stronger because it is becoming more adaptable." □

# 007

## MICHAEL G. WILSON

*The Eon Productions co-producer on propelling the patented Bond franchise into the new Millennium.*

By Alan Jones

A specialist in international taxation, Michael G. Wilson joined Eon Productions in 1972 and was named assistant to the producer on *THE SPY WHO LOVED ME*. He received his executive producer stripes on *MOONRAKER* and continued with that credit on *FOR YOUR EYES ONLY* and *OCTOPUSSY* which he also co-wrote along with *A VIEW TO A KILL*, *THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS* and *LICENSE TO KILL*. He became co-producer with his step-father Albert R. Broccoli on *A VIEW TO A KILL* and has continued in that capacity to the present date. And, yes, Wilson carries-on his Hitchcockian bent of appearing in a small cameo in each of the nine James Bond adventures he has produced. In *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, he plays a casino boss.

"You know, I go around the world and see so much anticipation for each new James Bond picture," said Wilson. "I get the same response everywhere I go—'Oh, the first film my dad ever took me to was *FROM RUSSIA LOVE*,' or 'I met my wife when I went to see *GOLDFINGER*.' There is such tremendous loyalty out there for every film we make and I never want to let the audience down. So we are still top-end style film-making and *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* is our most expensive entertainment to date [even though in real terms *MOONRAKER* is the biggest budgeted Bond of them all]. It's not just the audience who expects a certain standard from James Bond either. The industry expects a certain technical standard too, which all contempo-



Wilson (inset) cast Sophie Marceau as Elektra King, seen in ski action with Brosnan, because "we needed a great actress."

rary films try to meet.

The title of the nineteenth 007 spy saga comes from the Ian Fleming novel *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* and can be briefly glimpsed in the 1969 movie starring renegade Bond, George Lazenby. "It's taken from the Bond family motto," Wilson explained. "It's actually seen in Latin on the Bond Coat of Arms and its specific translation is 'The World is Insufficient.' It refers to the spiritual and moral sides of Bond's family character actually transcending the material. It's a good title for this particular story as it's more intriguing and more personal because of Bond's involvement with the mysterious woman Elektra King. You're not sure if she's good or bad. There's more mystery than normal in this tale for a different take on the Bond ethos."

Noted Wilson, "I'm often asked what I see as the difference between our James Bond films and all the other action movies that are out there. Sim-

ple. We have a British secret agent at the center of our stories. He's a European hero with an international flavor to his exploits. Every other action hero seems to be American. That's why Bond is a different action film in itself and in a genre on its own. It's action adventure, not science fiction, as all of our ideas are based on the technical realities of the world and their physical limitations. We try and create interesting, complex and adult stories than you would never see in other action films. I think that's our major difference."

For that unusual story this time out, Wilson and his co-producer wife Barbara Broccoli turned to screen writers Neil Purvis and Robert Wade, responsible for the 1991 British true crime thriller *LET HIM HAVE IT*. "Neil and Robert are two young writers whose work we really liked," said Wilson. "We worked with them for four months to get a proper handle on the narrative but the story always needed a main plot point.

Then Barbara saw this documentary on Baku, in Azerbaijan, where new oil finds are being made and starting off a new oil rush. That inspired them to come up with the central device we needed and then director Michael Apted came in to further discuss the script. We supervised the writers on a daily basis and didn't let them go away until we were all satisfied.

Every line of dialogue, every direction and every set described was endlessly thought about, discussed and commented on. There's a lot of great precision work to our scripts. That's

the kind of producers we are, very thorough. The Bond movies are a family business and as we own the franchise we are very careful about it."

That quality control is the reason behind why Michael Apted was chosen to direct *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*. "The only way the Bond series can survive is to have interesting stories, characters and situations," said Wilson. "That's the focus of what we have to do creatively. We have a great team and special effects crew who put their heads together to come up with sensational action and mind-boggling gadgets which all bring to bear on the story. But for the character and drama, which those aspects need to be wrapped around to shine, you need a good director. Michael Apted is one of the best performance directors around—he's renowned for it. His films are always strong on character development and that's what we needed here. When he first came to see us, he said, 'I'm not

**MICHAEL G. WILSON, CO-PRODUCER**

**“The very nature of Bond movies is we’re doing stuff we haven’t done before. Everything gets more complicated because you have to keep topping yourself & be up to date.”**

an action director’ and we said, ‘Good, we didn’t want one!’ We’ve got plenty of people who have worked with us for years to help him in that department. We wanted someone who was a good storyteller.”

An important part of the script is the humor, according to Wilson. “It’s slightly cynical black humor with a sophisticated angle, and no one is better than playing that than Pierce Brosnan. Every one of the actors who has ever played Bond is a leading man and brings their own personality to the part. It’s how they interpret the role that’s the key and Pierce brings a strong sense of romance, laced with biting humor, meshed with menace and his athletic ability. There’s a touch of vulnerability about him too, so when you craft the script you can come up with situations that perhaps were not appropriate for some of the other Bonds. For example, by falling in love

**The Bond difference:** “Every other action hero seems to be American,” noted Wilson of 007’s unique appeal.



with Elektra and then beginning to become suspicious of her, it’s an interesting twist that becomes the main intrigue of the piece.”

French superstar Sophie Marceau plays Elektra King for one main reason, explained Wilson. “We needed someone who was a great actress but who didn’t come with a pre-sold image. The problem if you take a popular star who’s a firm favorite and make her the bad girl, the audience won’t like that. They’ve come to see their star in a typical role. On the other hand, if you take someone who’s played nasty parts, like Sharon Stone for example, then everyone says ‘Oh, it’s Sharon, so of course she’s playing the villain.’ In order to sell this picture we had to go with a great actress who doesn’t come with any expectation of what she is. Sophie has boundless charm and everyone has fallen in love with her.”

Wilson loved TRAINSPOTTING and THE FULL MONTY, which is why Robert Carlyle was cast as the villainous Renard. “We went for fabulous actors because we had Michael Apted on board and we knew people would want to work with him,” said Wilson. “I’d seen Robert in an episode of the TV series CRACKER [coincidentally starring Robbie Coltrane, as returning Bond character Zurovsky] where he played a creepy and seriously menacing villain. That was the part foremost in our minds when we had to sell him to the studio. Every time you make a film you are faced with a new group of executives. You know how it is—they have to make a point for being there, so you are always second-guessing their questions. Our films are always put together for an international audience. That’s important to us as we make a lot of income internationally, something like 70%



**The focus isn’t all on drama this time out: Bond escapes exploding bombs during a skiing action sequence with Marceau, filmed in the French Alps.**

I think. We have to be sensitive to world demands, but you try putting that across to Hollywood executives.

“Robert Carlyle is like a firecracker. He brings a lot to the Renard role and the moments you feel sympathy for him are as important as the ones where you hate him. He has a real drive as the underdog who comes back and that makes him a different Bond villain, too.

“We are so lucky in our casting choices. Dame Judi Dench as M goes from strength to strength. Robbie Coltrane is back as Zurovsky, and he’s a delight. And now we’ve taken John Cleese on board as Q’s young assistant R. He plays it straight, but even when he does that, there’s always a twinkle there, of course. We will have to replace Desmond Llewelyn as Q in the fullness of time and Cleese is a great choice.”

One would imagine that producing a Bond adventure for such a veteran as Wilson would be like running a well-oiled machine. But the reality is far from wishful thinking. Noted Wilson, “The very nature of the Bond movies is we are always doing stuff we haven’t done before so there’s always a lot to worry about. Everything gets more complicated because you have to keep topping yourself and be up to date. We don’t have a car chase in this film because you can do those to death. We have

a boat chase up the River Thames instead because we’ve never had an extended action sequence set in London before. But just having bigger, longer bangs isn’t the answer. There are plenty of those films around already. We are an action adventure film series and we take our hero on a quest to exotic locations to meet interesting characters. That’s the heart of a Bond adventure—the stunt situations are just part of the unfolding story.”

The stunt situations in THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH include a skiing sequence in the French Alps with half parachute/half aeroplane gizmos called para-hawks, exploding bombs in eerie underground nuclear test facilities, helicopters with huge chainsaws hanging off them and the climactic fight in the vertical submarine powering itself into the sea bed and filling with water. Noted Wilson, “Pierce is very athletic but there is stuff we don’t allow him to do because it’s so dangerous. He does as much as is humanly possible and he’s always game to do more, but we don’t allow it. We’d have to shut down the film if he had an accident.”

Wilson thinks he’s a good producer for one main reason—the professional dedication of his core Bond crew, many of whom have worked with him for years. “I never have to crack



# 007

## ACTION STUNTS

*2nd unit director Vic Armstrong on putting Brosnan through his paces.*

*By Alan Jones*

Although Michael Apted was at the helm of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, as so many have before him in the same position, he turned to his second unit director Vic Armstrong to insure the action sequences were the best they could possibly be. The first James Bond adventure stunt man Victor M. Armstrong worked on was *YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE* back in 1967 and his special touch has since graced *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*, *LIVE AND LET DIE*, *NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN* (the 1983 renegade 007 adventure you don't talk about around the official Bond series) and *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*.

Armstrong's name is always somewhere on the credits of the best action movies. From *TOTAL RECALL* and *THE PHANTOM* to *STARSHIP TROOPERS* and *ENTRAPMENT*, Armstrong professes to a love/hate relationship with the industry he's so much a part of because of the arduous challenges he faces on a daily basis. "The hardest part of my job is trying to be original," he said. "You rack your brains for bigger and better stunts because the one person you can't cheat is yourself. I know what I've done before on other movies and I strive to be different each time. You have no idea how tough that is."

Nevertheless, Armstrong has faced the gruelling task of bringing Bond into the 21st century with *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* and credits his close relationship with Michael Apted for that. "Our collaboration has been marvellous and has worked like a dream. I advise him on what looks good

Bond veterans like stunt coordinator Vic Armstrong filmed 007 in action.

the whip," he said. "My job is just to help the top professionals we employ to do theirs. All the members of our crew are the best in their fields. It couldn't be any other way because every Bond movie is a huge operation and you are working with the same people day-in, day-out, six days a week from the moment you start pre-production in July 1998 to the premiere in November 1999. That's what happens when you are a producer for life, because making a Bond movie every two years takes up every second of your time."

Wilson isn't saying what the next James Bond adventure is going to be, but it's no secret that Eon Productions have recently purchased the remake rights to *CASINO ROYALE*.

"Technically there are some glitches in some territories in the world," he said. "It's a fully-fledged Ian Fleming Bond but it's a camp raid situation as Bond must react to the world in a different time frame. He's a secret service agent, he has integrity and loyalty and he knows what's right and wrong, but he lives in the modern world and must interact accordingly. *CASINO ROYALE* will have to be updated for contemporary demands. We have a contract with Pierce to make a fourth Bond. If he's game for another, we certainly are. It certainly is in all our minds at the moment." □



Brosnan as Bond escapes on a wire with the goods. Noted second unit director Armstrong, "We used Pierce a great deal more than expected."

within a scene—the little nuances in the physical performances that count—while he tells me what quirks he wants me to include in mine. I hate second unit directing, in truth. I much prefer directing proper. I directed *ARMY OF ONE* in 1993 and an episode of *THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES*. The latter featured no stunts because producer George Lucas thought that would be amusing. But if you are going to do a second unit job you might as well work with the best like Apted and Pierce

Brosnan. Pierce is fantastic and his dry sense of Irish humor really makes everything go with a sparkle. I sometimes never know if he's joking or not."

Armstrong's work on *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* has mainly split into four basic action sequences. "The first is the boat chase down the River Thames in London," he recounted. "The second is the ski chase in the French Alps. The third is the battle on the walkways of Zukovsky's caviar factory in Azerbaijan. The fourth, which we are sharing half and half with the main unit, is the

Russian submarine sinking vertically into the Caspian Sea. The latter has taken us to the Bosphorous and back to Pinewood and includes the submarine tilting, diving and flooding, the fight in the reactor room between Bond, Renard and Christmas, Bond's escape, and then the whole thing blowing up."

Armstrong said the Thames boat chase was the most difficult stunt sequence of all. The chase takes in many London tourist sights—the Houses of Parliament, Tower Bridge and Docklands—as tuxedoed 007 pursues the mysterious Cigar Girl at 60 mph in a Bentz boat. "Working on water is always hard and time consuming," said Armstrong. "We had a 25-foot tide level to consider and we had to change all the moorings in the afternoons when the water ran in reverse. We photographed the entire sequence with an armada of



## VIC ARMSTRONG, STUNT MAESTRO

**"Sometimes it's better to use stunt men—all they think about is the stunt in question. An actor is worried about that, looking good, and remembering his lines. Not a good combination."**



Bond escapes an explosion in the tunnel of a nuclear test facility (top), and dodges helicopters equipped with chainsaws at a caviar factory (below), two of the key action sequences filmed by second unit director Armstrong (left).



35 boats and also used a flying camera from Belgium so we could dive under the bridges along the Thames. We shot for seven days on the river itself and then moved to Docklands so we wouldn't have to contend with the tidal problems. That's where we filmed the jet-powered boat leaping out of the water and zooming along the roads through an East End market. We had warned all the workers on the Thames and the only ones who complained were Members of Parliament in the Houses of Parliament. Typical! The people we are paying to be there and who were going to earn revenue off the film were the only ones to register complaints."

The ski sequence was shot in the French Alps during avalanche season and, in fact,

one of the worst hit while the movie was there. "It was tough to keep going when you knew some of the people whose lives were lost," he said. "Working on snow is so scary because you are air-lifting 180 crew members in on helicopters to areas that could shift. We were landing on slopes inches away from a complete vertical drop. One gust of wind

and it would have been all over. ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE has a great radical skiing sequence in it and to make our's different, we used these great devices called parahawks—a sort of cross between a parachute and a motorized glider which you steer to land and take-off. Despite the problems such a sequence entails, I

do prefer shooting on location rather than in the studio because the latter has such a factory feel. You have to rehearse and rehearse on location, of course, and then try and make it all look spontaneous, but I rise to those occasions more than tackling problems in a studio tank."

But one of Armstrong's studio-set sequences which he thinks is going to be a major highlight is the caviar factory one. "We shot that on the Pinewood backlot on a set that cost over \$1 million," he said. "It's a night-time sequence and has two helicopters with circular saws attached to their undercarriage attacking Bond on wooden walkways and cutting up the whole building. The helicopters are actually used to cut trees back from high tension cables and we've adapted them for this thrilling scene."

Although Sophie Marceau did her own skiing in the Alps, Pierce Brosnan turned out not to be that adept at the sport. So Brosnan did most of the boat chase sequence instead. Armstrong added, "We had to be careful, though, as the waves at those speeds were hitting him in the face like sledgehammers. We must never risk our lead actor or put him in a position where he can black his eyes or lose a tooth. But because Pierce wanted to legitimize the sequence as much as he could we used him a great deal more than expected. Sometimes it is better to use stunt men because all they are thinking about is the stunt in question. An actor is worried about that, and looking good, and remembering his lines. Not a good combination."

Working with the same crew he's had on his last five movies, Armstrong feels he's done his job on THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH. "What's the difference between this one and TOMORROW NEVER DIES? We did more traveling to exotic locations on the last. Making the Bond films special is so hard, you know. You want realism within the tongue-in-cheek aspects, yet you can't step outside Bond's character or that destroys the unique atmosphere. Staying within the Bond rules, yet trying to be fresh and original while he saves the world again is a nightmare." □

# 007

## ROBERT CARLYLE

*The star of TRAINSPOTTING and THE FULL MONTY on making his mark as a Bond villain.*

By Alan Jones

The name means fox in French. And actor Robert Carlyle is trying to imbue his Renard character with enough wily traits to make him the most sadistic James Bond villain yet. Renard goes head-to-head with 007 in *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* because he wants to control the world's oil supply—a mission made even more personal because Bond is also protecting the only woman he has ever truly loved, Elektra King. Complete with a bullet embedded in his brain which blocks all sensation, including pain, Renard is a major challenge for the Scottish actor who made everyone sit up and take notice in *TRAINSPOTTING*, shot to international fame as the star of *THE FULL MONTY*, and is currently being tipped for an Oscar for his searing performance in *ANGELA'S ASHES*.

The offer to play Renard came completely out of the blue for the actor who was recently seen in the highwayman epic *PLUNKETT AND MACLEANE* and the cannibal western *RAVENOUS*. Noted Carlyle, "I wouldn't go as far to say it was an ambition to appear in a Bond movie, but once the part was on offer it was a really simple decision to say yes. I've grown up with the movies like everyone else has. I remember going to see Sean Connery in Bond movies with my dad and the link between Connery and Bond in Scottish acting terms is quite a fundamental one. I've played a lot of villains, so the combination was a fun one to try and fit together again. The first time I got the script, I was looking for the cliché memorable lines. I think, 'Don't wor-



Carlyle as Renard, a terrorist out to control the world's oil supply, complete with a bullet lodged in his brain which blocks all sensation, including pain.

ry, I'll take care of Mr. Bond' is my classic. But so many have said that sort of thing before."

Noted Carlyle, "There was nothing specific in the script that particularly attracted me, it was the overall quality of the story and the writing. This kind of film is very much of the comic book genre so you're not usually looking for any great depth, just a great plot. This certainly had the latter and it seemed much stronger with regards to the villainous aspects. I also felt safe with Michael Apted on board. Although it's hard to say if it would have been a more difficult choice with anyone else directing, I took a great deal of comfort from the fact that Michael was at the helm. He made my choice easier to make. I've been a big admirer of his since the Seven-Up documentaries and I think *COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER* is a

fantastic movie. The combination of Michael with Bond was an interesting one. Plus I was entering this unknown 007 world with a similar person who wasn't used to doing this sort of stuff either. So I thought we'd be good for each other in that respect."

But if Carlyle expected the production to be cliquey in any way, he was pleasantly surprised by the whole Bond family atmosphere. Noted Carlyle, "Everyone on the show seems to have done ten Bonds already, so there is that family feeling, but it's a very welcoming one. Once you're in you are made to feel very safe and welcome straight away. It's not a case of, 'Oh, they've been through this process so many times before, I'll just have to go along with it.' No, they are careful at integrating you and that comes from producer Barbara Broccoli

at the top. She's a fantastic woman, and I mean that. I'm no producer's friend by any means, usually the opposite. The shock to the system is the huge size of the production. I mean five units, an 800-plus crew—it's like an army. I don't think anyone can be prepared for the sheer size of a Bond movie."

Carlyle knew going into *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* that the biggest pressure on him would be to make Renard distinctive from all the other great Bond villains. "Donald Pleasence as Blofeld was always my favorite," he said. "Robert Shaw was wonderful in *FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE* too. Pleasence was a very quirky actor and I can honestly say I've drawn inspiration from him without modeling myself directly on his screen persona. The bullet hole wound I have on my right temple is reminiscent of Blofeld's scar, I suppose. But I don't stroke a cat! You do have to look for something to distinguish Renard from the crowd. That had already been written in for me really, with the bullet lodged in his head. The twist there being he's already dying and that makes him particularly difficult to kill. If he doesn't fear death, then he doesn't fear anything, and that's the crux of his character. I don't feel any pain either, as the bullet has cut off all such senses—something I like to show off with burning coals in one particular highlight."

Unlike Jonathan Pryce before him [Elliot Carver in *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*], Carlyle didn't have any input into the script. "It was pretty much the way it was all

throughout shooting right from the beginning," he said. "Frankly, I've kept my performance pretty soft. It's important when you're playing nasty bad guys, particularly here because I look so grotesque, that you don't actually act it out too much. I look evil, and everyone tells you Renard is evil, so you don't necessarily have to play evil. Layering and layering it with villainous quirks would have made it too much. That was the danger. However, with any villain you must find a sympathetic aspect, one the audience can relate to. Here it's in his relationship with Elektra King, because he's 100% besotted by her and will do anything she wants. That's his soft center. Not so hard to achieve with Sophie Marceau, obviously, because she's gorgeous and that was the easiest part of the job."

Carlyle can't really talk about the relationship Renard has with Elektra because it's an ambiguous one and important to the all-action denouement. But he has nothing but praise for the BRAVEHEART actress. "It sounds daft but I expected Sophie to be mega-French in



**ROBERT CARLYLE ON BOND**

**“Pierce Brosnan’s set fire to the Bond genre again. Would I like to take over as Bond when he retires? Hmmm, another Scottish Bond! I’m not Bond. Bond villain most definitely.”**



Bond's dogged pursuit of Renard turns personal when the terrorist poses a threat to Elektra King. Left: Carlyle's favorite Bond villain and inspiration, Donald Pleasence as Blofeld in *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*.

every aspect. I even thought she might have to learn the script phonetically. Dumb, or what? But her English was great and we got on extremely well. The women's parts are stronger in *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* than they have ever been before in any other Bond film. You are going to notice that, because Elektra is a strong woman who knows what she wants in her life, career and loves and that comes shining through in Sophie's performance."

Although Carlyle has a very strong Glaswegian accent in reality, that's not the one you'll be hearing in the picture. "It was left up to me what nationality to make Renard although I didn't want it to be too specific," he said. "I made him Bosnian and fabricated a back story just for myself in my mind which doesn't come into the film in any way. Bosnia is a dangerous part of the world at this moment and I see Renard as a military man who has seen the horror of it all and decided to make a lot of

money out of it as these mercenary guys usually do. Hence the cropped hair look I have.

"I found a Bosnian actor in the Yellow Pages and spoke to him for about a week. I also listened to tapes of him in my spare time. It didn't have to be precise because it's going to be over-dubbed anyway. That's something different from every film I've made before. The sound mix is so much higher what with all the overhead jets, explosions and gun fire. You often can't hear yourself speak on

the day of shooting anyway so in the over-dubbing I'll make sure to get the accent absolutely right."

Creating a back-story for his character is something Carlyle has done on every film he's appeared in. "It doesn't matter if it's seen or not—it's important to me to have that history inside my head. Sometimes it's easier because the history of the character is unfolded in the script. Here it isn't, except you know that Renard and Elektra have a past and that he's fought with MI6 years before. I had discussions with Michael [Apted] on Renard because he was a difficult character to get my head around. I mean, if Renard doesn't feel anything at all because of the bullet, does that mean he doesn't feel emotionally either? If that had been the case, I would have had nothing to work with, and I didn't want to just be a performing robot. So we had to come and go with that aspect to some extent which made a few of the scenes a little tricky. The whole purpose of this guy in the movie is to protect Elektra and do anything he can for her. Therefore the focus is on someone else for Renard rather than the drama inside his own head. A difficult balancing act indeed."

Noted Carlyle, "It's not easier to play a villain, although comedy is the hardest thing of all in my profession. That's only because you have a one-page sequence and you must shoot it from six different angles. So you've said these lines maybe 25 times already but, by the end of the day, they've become meaningless. With comedy that mustn't happen—you have to keep it fresh. Villains are easier in that respect. The importance is not to start off at Level Ten, more lower down the scale, and then work up to that fever pitch. Doing sadistic actions are wonderful therapy because you get your demons out on the stage at Pinewood and you don't have to take them home with you."

Naturally, like every Bond villain before him, Carlyle has a few stunts to do in the movie. "I haven't had a huge amount to do because it's so continuous," he said. "What's a 'stunt day' in a normal film is *de rigueur* for this one, you just deal with it daily.



Director Michael Apted rehearses Robert Carlyle as Renard for his subterranean confrontation with 007. Noted Carlyle, "Being sadistic is wonderful therapy."

The one I've been rehearsing today is a real killer—the fight in the submarine, the set of which is half the size of my dressing room. And because the sub is sinking vertically, there's bars, control panels and scaffolding all the way up and down to keep getting in the way. That's been a five-day job in itself."

Noted Carlyle, "It's tough to stay centered and actually act, what with all the stunts, special effects and waiting around. I've found that the continuity is the hardest discipline to cope with. Especially when the production is involved in a stunt sequence with Pierce Brosnan that's going to take two weeks to shoot. So I'm off for that period of time and then I have to come back two weeks later with the same accent and level of performance. Your concentration levels are at a premium on a movie of this type. There is an awful lot of waiting around because that's the way it is. It's hard to describe how draining it is to lie on my dressing room bed for ten hours waiting to be called. An absolute killer! Often they can only do one take because it would take ages to set it all up

again, so you have to be great first time out. I went on location to Spain for this movie. I was only in one scene, but I had a six-day holiday. For most people that would be great. For me it's a nightmare, because I'm sitting there tapping my fingers. I want to work. And I can't get a tan!"

Even so, Carlyle was thrilled when he walked on *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* set for the first time, as he explained. "My first words were, fuck me, because I saw Pierce and the reality of being in a Bond movie finally set in. I was watching Pierce on the monitor and I couldn't stop myself. Pierce is a real star. He has a quality that very few actors have. There's a charisma about him. It's a tangible thing, you can feel it coming off of him. Many who have that often don't try too hard. The biggest compliment I can pay Pierce is that he gives you everything he's got, even on the other side of the camera. For the schedule he has, he's on call every single day, working really hard, but he will still hang around for an eye-line for you even though he doesn't have to. He waited five

hours for me one day just to do that. I can't praise Pierce too highly. I love him."

Added Carlyle, "Pierce was the biggest surprise on this movie. I'd heard from everyone he was a nice guy, but I didn't realize quite how nice until we spent some time together and went out for a few fun nights. Sean Connery is my favorite Bond of all. But Pierce made a good point when we were chatting the other night. For a lot of my generation, Sean was the man, but for a whole new generation, Pierce now is. It has to develop like that. Many people liked Roger Moore. Everyone has their own favorite. But since the '60s, Pierce has set fire to the whole Bond genre again. Would I like to take over as Bond when Pierce retires? Hmm, another Scottish Bond! No, I don't think I'm Bond material. Bond villain material most definitely..."

Despite the clever career choices he's made, Carlyle insists it has never been his intention to become a superstar. "That's nice if it comes along but I've never worked to become famous. I've always tried to do the best work I can. This

is a different type of thing for me entirely, an opportunity I couldn't miss. An opportunity for me to do something so out of my realm of experience. It's sheer murder for an actor to keep repeating himself and I was in danger of that happening after *TRAINSPOTTING* and *THE FULL MONTY*. Every young hard-nut, gang member and unemployed stripper was being offered to me. I had to get away from that."

Noted Carlyle, "It's all about career perception. You don't change, but people's perception of you does. You don't change as a person but people think you fundamentally have and that's a constant battle in your life. You have to placate that and let people know that isn't the case. You are the same person in a different scenario, that's all. What keeps me grounded? I still live in Glasgow. It's as simple as that. I live two miles away from where I was born. People ask me why I haven't moved to Los Angeles. Well I haven't even moved to London! I've had offers to do so but it's not in my heart. It's just not me. And me is what I want to remain." □

## BEHIND-THE-SCENES OF BOND

*From designing a sinking submarine to rigging helicopters with chainsaws—here's how it's done.*

By Alan Jones

Is it any accident that the last film production designer Peter Lamont worked on was *TITANIC* and that *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* ends with a Russian submarine tilting and sinking in the Bosphorus? The Oscar-winning Lamont smiled, "This was more fun to do than *TITANIC*, I can assure you, although imagining a room up on its end is quite a difficult thing to do. When I designed the submarine sets—the Royal Navy were a great help—after it was built I told director Michael Apted to go and take a look because it was bound to be even more different and spectacular than he was expecting. Then he could tailor his action to the unique look."

Lamont couldn't design *TOMORROW NEVER DIES* because he was working on *TITANIC*. But he preferred *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* to *GOLDENEYE* because, "We are in a real studio this time. Pinewood is the home of James Bond. I first worked at the studio on *THE SPY WHO LOVED ME*. *GOLDENEYE* was made at Leavesden which was an old factory and felt like it. I've had to build two huge sets for this Bond—the interior and exterior of a nuclear facility—and I don't think it would have worked out at Leavesden."

Noted Lamont, "It's always good to design realism—to reflect what's happening in the real world. I love designing Bond films for that reason. The idea of being able to design the interior of the MI6 building which may, or may not, look like the real thing is exciting. I do hope I haven't compromised national security with my conjecture of



The 45 foot miniature of the Russian mini-sub piloted by Bond and Christmas Jones which model effects supervisor John Richardson sunk in the Bahamas.

what it looks like! Plus, I like being part of the team. Producer Cubby Broccoli's big edict always was, 'If you've got something to say, say it' and both Barbara Broccoli and Michael Wilson have continued with that tradition. Although the dire political situation in Turkey meant changing our big build location to Northern Spain instead. Looking back, I feel we've achieved sets on *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* that you've never seen the like of before."

The whole essence of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* story is how to re-route oil pipelines through the Caspian Sea. The end of one pipeline was designed by Lamont to be a combination of a construction site and a chapel built on the Spanish location. But it was up to miniature effects supervisor John Richardson to build the model equivalents showing the pipeline stretching across Europe. The veteran of seven Broccoli Bonds said, "We built eighth-scale model pipelines in Snowdonia, Wales, in Black

Park, just outside the studio [where many Hammer horrors were shot] and on the backlot itself. We had to build the pipeline on the backlot with a quarter-scale foreground because otherwise the dust coming off Bond's car wouldn't have looked realistic."

With most blockbuster productions shifting to computer graphic effects, the Bond movies do seem to be one of the last bastions of the miniature model craft. Richardson said, "There's a great tendency to use CGI these days because a lot of technicians are coming into the business from that side and think that's always the answer to the problem. They don't necessarily understand what can be done with more conventional methods like model work. On the Bond films we use whatever method will look the best and models usually look more realistic while saving money too. It's also more impressive-looking when you blow-up a model rather than do it in a computer."

For *THE WORLD IS NOT*

*ENOUGH* Richardson built a quarter-scale model of the MI6 building, miniature walkways for Zukovsky's caviar factory, oil derricks for the Azerbaijan backdrop and scale versions of the Millennium Dome spires. But his hardest job was building a 45-foot submarine and taking it to the Bahamas to simulate the climactic sinking effect. Noted Richardson, "It was difficult because we had to take the model down to a depth of 100 feet so when it was hung vertically you could see water above and below it. Each dive we did took 19 minutes of shooting time. Also, in the Bahamas, you suddenly go from a 100 feet in depth to a chasm of 6,000. We had to be careful not to lose the model over the drop because I certainly wasn't going down after it!"

Noted Richardson, "It's always difficult doing Bond miniatures because they are always based on realism. Everyone knows what a submarine looks like and a government office building. People know what explosions look like too because you see them every night on the news. But the Bond movies are escapist fun set in the real world. They started the genre and are still leading the way. I'm glad precision model work remains a part of that tradition too."

Another Bond veteran is special effects supervisor Chris Corbould, who started working on the 007 series when he was 16 years old with *THE SPY WHO LOVED ME*. Eight films later he's in control of all the spectacular mechanics needed to realize the nineteenth Bond in the series. Corbould moved straight from *THE MUMMY* to *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* and admitted he went numb when he first read the script. "I just said,



Brosnan as Bond in action on production designer Peter Lamont's Russian oil pipeline set. Lamont has been a 007 designer since *THE SPY WHO LOVED ME*.

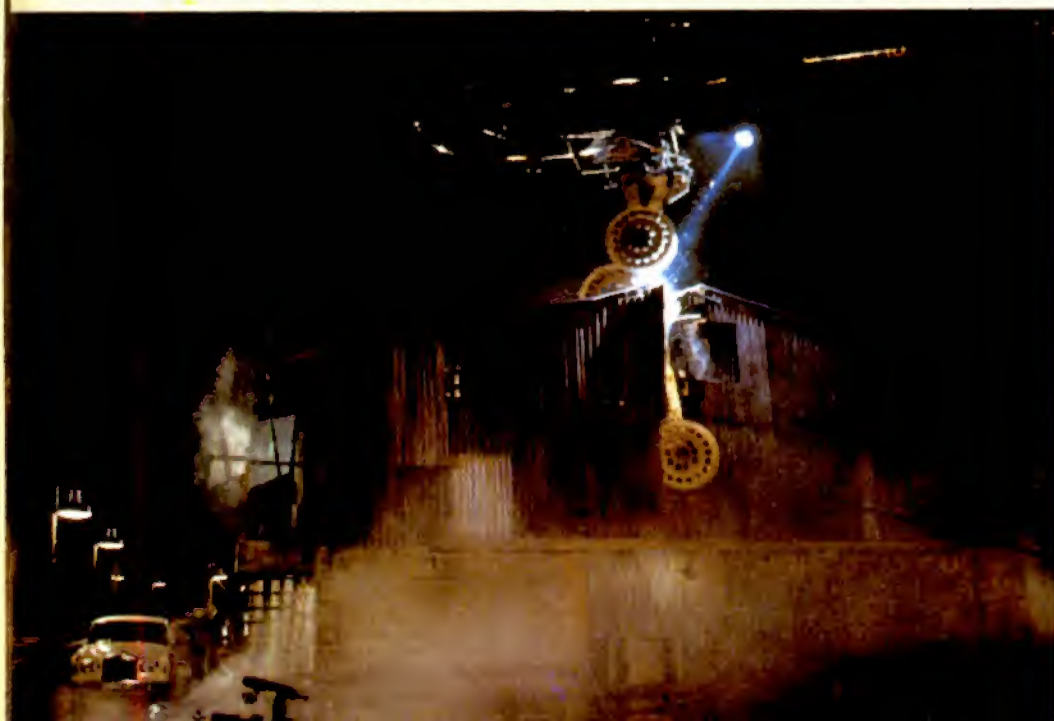
'Oh my God!' That was mainly because of the helicopters with 17-foot chainsaws suspended beneath them and their attack on Zukovsky's caviar factory. This sequence had been planned for *GOLDENEYE* but after I'd done some preliminary testing it had been written out. I was so relieved. My heart sank when I saw it had reappeared here five times as bad because Michael [Wilson] didn't want to lose the novelty look of the helicopters."

Noted Corbould, "It was the safety aspects that concerned me. Having actors so close to circular blades is a nightmare. We tested and tested on different materials, because the saws have to cut through wooden walkways and cars, and adapted them to make them look more menacing than they actually were. We got the biggest tower crane we

could find in Europe, with an 80-foot stretch, and totally computerized it so we could control the helicopter hanging from it exactly. It almost became this huge motion control helicopter which we could program to go through the same procedure time and time again."

For the climactic submarine sequence Corbould's 80-man crew built ballast tanks to flood one end of the full-size rig to simulate the craft tilting up and power driving itself into the sea bed. He also devised a fireball stunt as he explained, "It's a shot we did in the nuclear test facility where Bond has to go down this 200-foot-long underground tunnel chased by a massive fireball. We sequenced a series of pyrotechnics just the right safety distance away from Pierce Brosnan and then set off

Helicopters with 17-foot chainsaws suspended beneath attack Bond at a Russian caviar factory, rigged by mechanical effects supervisor Chris Corbould.



## CO-ORDINATING STUNTS ON BOND

**"All the major technicians get the script," said Simon Crane, "and do a chart with marks out of ten for content, originality and do-ability. It's the best way to plan a Bond adventure."**

a chain reaction of explosions timed as he ran past. Pierce wanted his face in the sequence as much as possible and luckily I have a good enough relationship with him to tell him what I think he can and can't do."

Corbould's favorite effect for *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* is an enormous explosion at the nuclear power plant. "We shot the scene in a valley in Spain. One side of the valley was loaded with chemicals. The other side was where the entrance to the power plant was. Then a plane flies through the center and when it got level to the test facility, we let the explosive off, and it looked fabulous. A simple effect but a stunning one. Even the blandest stuff on paper has turned out to be wonderful and we've been able to achieve far higher results on this Bond than I first thought was possible."

Every time Pierce Brosnan wants to take part in one of the stunts, like the fireball one, it's up to Chris Corbould to liaise with stunt coordinator Simon Crane on the safety aspects. Crane was stunt coordinator on *SAVING PRIVATE RYAN*, *BRAVEHEART*, *TITANIC* and doubled for Timothy Dalton on his two Bond movies, *LICENCE TO KILL* and *THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS*. Noted Crane, "I get the script four months before shooting to see what's going to work, what isn't and what can be jazzed up. It was my idea, for example, to use the para-hawks in the ski sequence. All the major technicians on a Bond movie get the script and do a chart with marks out of ten for content, originality and do-ability. It's by far the best way of planning a James Bond adventure."

"It's my job to ensure the actors can do a stunt to an agreed safety point. Fitness doesn't matter when you devise things for them to do, al-

though each actor has been good in certain key areas. Pierce is wonderful with boats, for example, Sophie Marceau on skis. I must create the illusion of putting them in danger while minimizing the risks to all concerned. To do that successfully, you must know everyone's limitations going in, including your own."

Crane feels the most impressive stunt he's pulled off for *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH* is the barrel roll in the opening chase sequence on the River Thames. Noted Crane, "It's a throwaway stunt where Bond's boat hits the one driven by the Cigar Girl, flies in the air, turns over, and lands back in the water. We put two jets in the back of the Benz boat. One fired up, the other fired down, and when it was in the air we hit the fire controls and it rotated. Marvellous. Much better than anything in *FACE/OFF* and quite an edgy stunt for Bond." □

Brosnan poses with the para-hawks suggested by stunt coordinator Simon Crane for the Alps ski chase.



# 007

## INSPECTOR GADGET

*Desmond Llewelyn on playing Q in every Bond film but two, rates 007s from Connery to Brosnan.*

By David Giammarco

You may not know his name, but you certainly know his letter: "Q." AKA Major Boothroyd. As head of MI6's "Q" Branch, the British Secret Service department responsible for supplying James Bond with his dazzling array of uniquely lethal gadgets and wildly modified sports cars, 86-year-old Desmond Llewelyn remains the last thread throughout the entire Bond series.

"Bond is the most famous fictional character in the world and I suppose I'm the most famous small-part actor," laughed Llewelyn on the Pinewood Studios set of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*. "I've only had tiny parts in the films, and yet I'm known all over the world."

Llewelyn, the distinguished, silver-haired Welsh actor, is marking his 17th appearance in the 007 series with *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, having acted in every official Bond film but *DR. NO* and *LIVE AND LET DIE*. For 36 years, the long-suffering Q has had to endure 007's consistent cavalier and reckless handling of his technological wonders. Q has remained the series' most endearing character, constantly



Llewelyn, now 86, with Timothy Dalton as Bond in 1989's *LICENSE TO KILL*. Noted Llewelyn, "Timothy was much more a real Bond than the others."

scolding Bond to "Pay attention, 007!" and futilely pleading with the reckless agent to "Bring it back in one piece!" And, of course, Bond never does. Llewelyn admitted those ever-frustrating lectures to Bond are still enjoyable.

"Any acting is always fun to me," smiled Llewelyn, who made his film debut in 1939 in the Will Hay comedy *ASK A POLICEMAN*. "Unfortunately, I don't get much of an opportunity to do it these days because I've been so typecast as Q. But when I get a chance to play Q again, I just love it. And I was

lucky, because I've managed to get three days worth of work on this one."

And for *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, Llewelyn has also gotten a new assistant, named "R." But to the world, R is perhaps better known under his civilian name—John Cleese. The Monty Python funnyman is making the first of what will be regular Bond appearances as a Q-Branch wizard. "John Cleese is extremely good," reported Llewelyn. "He's very funny, and it's been quite enjoyable working with him. Now some-

one else can share in the grief Bond has given Q," he chuckled.

Even though he's played cinema's most brilliant inventor, Llewelyn lamented that not only is he technologically illiterate in real-life, but he admits he's absolutely hopeless. "I can't even fix the toaster," he sighed. "I know nothing about gadgets. I've had to learn all my lines over the years like a parrot! If I'm in the London underground and my train ticket doesn't work going through the turnstile, somebody will inevitably say, 'You're Q—I thought you ought to be able to at least do that!'"

He noted people are always surprised to see him traveling London's public transit system, "but I'm a pensioner, and to travel up to London by car or taxi is too expensive," he explained.

Llewelyn says his favorite Bond film still remains 1963's *FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE*, where he not only made his first appearance as the gizmo guru, but got to introduce the now-infamous trick briefcase, complete with balanced throwing knife, tear-gas disguised as a talcum powder canister, infrared telescope sight, 40 rounds of ammunition and an

Outfitting Connery with his special briefcase in 1963's *FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE*, his 007 debut.



Attending Bond's fateful wedding with one-time 007 George Lazenby in 1969's *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*.



With Roger Moore in *THE SPY WHO LOVED ME*. "He followed Connery brilliantly," said Llewelyn.





## DESMOND LLEWELYN ON BOND

**“Ian Fleming’s dictum was, to any thriller add all the advantages of expensive living, and take your story along so fast that nobody notices the idiosyncrasies in it.”**



Llewelyn as Q, aka Colonel Boothroyd, schools Pierce Brosnan as 007 in the operation of his remote controlled car in 1997's *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*.

AR-7 folding stock survival rifle.

“I just think it was an extraordinarily good film,” Llewelyn reflected. “I think Sean [Connery] was at his best. Terence Young directed it absolutely brilliantly. And to be honest, I think a lot of the success that the Bonds have had should be attributed to Terence. He was sort of a Bond character himself. I think those first four Bond films are absolute classics, because they were Fleming’s stories, you see. And brilliantly adapted by Richard Maibaum. I think they showed Bond at his best.

“But I think the others are extremely good too,” added Llewelyn, who met Ian Fleming for the first time on the set of 1964’s *GOLDFINGER*. “They’ve all kept the same essence of Fleming. But, of course, the last one was more adapted for young people. There was terrific action, action, action. And I think with any luck, this new one doesn’t have quite so much action—it’s more going back to what it should be.”

For *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, Llewelyn delivers a new array of high-tech toys to his least-favorite secret agent, including a souped-up speedboat, new sports car with all the bells and whistles, and even an inflatable coat. “You know, the usual stuff,” said Llewelyn matter-of-factly. But after 36 years of every gadget imaginable, Llewelyn says his favorite still remains the Aston Martin DB-5 from *GOLDFIN-*

*GER*.

The fact that Llewelyn is still acting is a feat in itself—one that well-meaning relatives, the call of the cloth and a world war could not derail. Born in South Wales in 1913, he was the son of a coal-mining engineer and seemed destined for a career in that field. When he failed the eye exam to become a policeman, he thought about becoming a minister and went on a week-long retreat. “But I knew right away that was definitely not for me.” What was left was acting, Llewelyn decided. “I was accepted to the Royal Academy for the Dramatic Arts,” he said, feigning a bit of pomposity before chuckling and saying, “They had about 50 men and 200 women at the academy. I think they were only too glad to take any man who happened to come along.”

But then World War II put an end to his plans. In September, 1939, Llewelyn went to Sandhurst and was later commissioned as a second lieutenant in the British Army. He was assigned to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and was sent to France in early 1940. In a short time, his regiment was fighting the Germans, and Llewelyn’s company was captured. For the next five years, he was a prisoner of war at several camps in Germany.

“There were a lot of bloody awful things to recall, but as I get older I find that I only remember the good times,” he admitted. After the war, Llewelyn returned to London and revived

his acting career. “Then my agent called me one day and said he had a role for me in the new James Bond movie.”

That was 1963, and producer Albert Broccoli was producing his second 007 movie, *FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE*, following up on the character’s debut in *DR. NO* the year before. The popularity was building steadily. But did Llewelyn think he would end up becoming part of a worldwide pop culture phenomenon, going on 37 years now? “Oh good God, no! I don’t think anybody did,” he said. “I thought it would just be a one time thing, really. And then I was thrilled when I was asked to do *GOLDFINGER*.”

So what does Llewelyn think is the secret to the enduring success of the James Bond films? “I think it’s because, as Ian Fleming said, Bond is what every man would like to be and knows damn well he can’t be,” Llewelyn mused. “The films are pure fantasy, you see. Everything is bigger and larger than life. And Cubby Broccoli, who was responsible really for the whole set up, followed Fleming’s dictum, which was to any thriller add all the advantages of expensive living. Give Bond the right clothes, the right background and the right girls, set your story in the most beautiful place, describe everything in minute detail, and take your story along so fast that nobody notices the idiosyncrasies in it. And Cubby did that, and he also added Hitchcock’s thing, which was when you come to a climax, you then have another one and another one.”

How does Llewelyn rank the Bonds?

Sean Connery: “He used to fiddle a lot in the scenes, which used to distract me from remembering my lines. Now I’m an old man, and as much as I flub, I don’t really mind. One

can always say, ‘Oh, poor old Desmond. He’s so old he can’t remember his lines.’ Which is really quite true.”

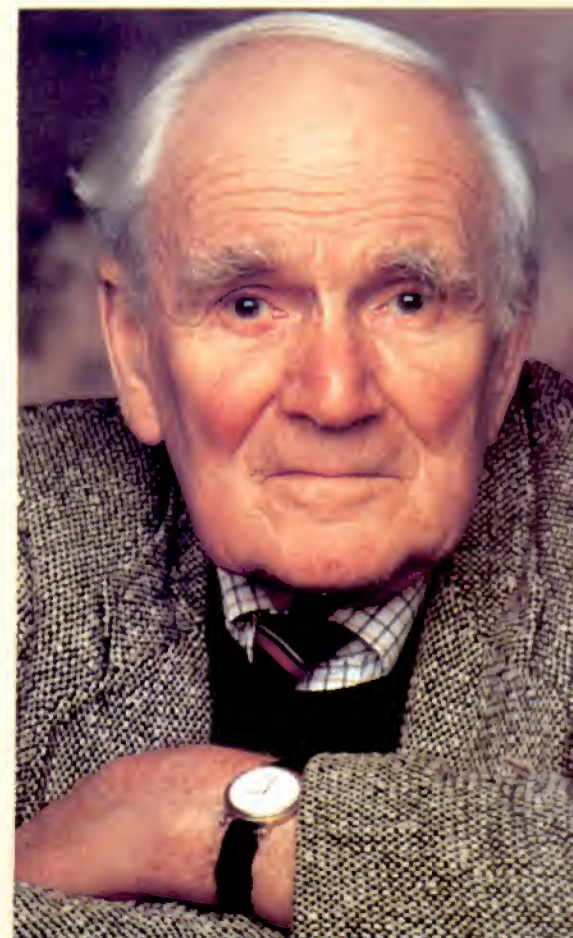
George Lazenby: “An amateur. You can not put a man who has had no experience in the theatre or in films into a part like that. He was a car salesman, and he really didn’t know anything about acting.

Roger Moore: “I think a lot of people underestimated Roger, because he had such a fantastically difficult job following Sean Connery. But he did it brilliantly.”

Timothy Dalton: “Timothy went back to the Bond of Fleming’s books. He took the part very seriously—perhaps too seriously, some say. But I think Timothy was a much more real Bond than the others.”

Pierce Brosnan: “He’s actually a very good mix of Sean, Roger and Timothy. Pierce makes a sensational Bond—the role fits him like a glove.” □

Llewelyn, now 86 and a London pensioner, dubs himself the most famous small-part actor in the world.





Connery in his prime in 1964's *GOLDFINGER*, about to bed soon-to-be Golden Girl Shirley Eaton. Connery said he would consider returning to the series.



Connery presents his card to Zena Marshall as Miss Taro after a game of bacarat in 1962's *DR. NO*, the role that rocketed him to international stardom.



# 007

## SEAN CONNERY

**The actor who defined Bond looks back on the series.**

*By David Giammarco*

There's good news and bad news concerning Sean Connery's much-anticipated return to the James Bond films. The good news is Connery may be interested. The bad news is no one has made him an offer.

Ever since Pierce Brosnan resuscitated the Bond series with *GOLDENEYE* and *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*, the rumors have been flying that Connery would make a return to the series. Not as Bond, however, but as James Bond's father. Or perhaps even a villain. The Bond camp had slyly alluded to it, Brosnan was hopeful, and fans rejoiced at the news of the unique casting twist.

"I hear about my supposed return every year now," confessed Connery, now 68 in his home town of Edinburgh. "There have been no overtures made to me. I would certainly consider it. I don't know if I could avoid it, really.

"But, quite frankly," he added with his characteristic wry grin and raised arched eyebrow, "I don't think they could afford me."

Connery defined the 007 role, but his ability to transcend it took much longer than expected. As a result, Connery has always held a love/hate re-

lationship with his infamous alter ego. It did make him a worldwide superstar and was the biggest break of his career. But when Bondmania swept the globe in the mid-'60s, Connery was trapped in the eye of a storm which had taken on Beatle-esque proportions. In fact, James Bond and the Beatles were the two biggest pop-culture icons to emerge from that decade. "And there were four of *them* to kick it around," he joked, admitting it took years for him to recover.

Born to humble beginnings, Thomas Sean Connery grew up in a poor and rugged part of Edinburgh, near a rubber mill and a brewery. "The place smelled of rubber and hops," remembered Connery. His father worked at the mill 12 hours a day and his work ethic rubbed off on his son. "It's blind allegiance, in a way. Therefore I couldn't wait to go to work."

Shortly after his brother Neil was born, nine-year-old Sean began rising at six a.m. to deliver milk before going to school. It was wartime, and while his father worked in a munitions factory in Glasgow, Sean was doing his part to keep the family afloat.

Connery said he recalls life being "disruptive." Still, he managed to see a few movies on

## SEAN CONNERY

**“I hear about my supposed return every year. There have been no overtures made to me. I would certainly consider it. But, quite frankly, I don’t think they could afford me.”**



Connery chats with James Bond’s creator, the late Ian Fleming, on the set of *DR. NO. FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE* is Connery’s favorite film in the series.

Saturdays, trading jam jars and beer bottles, he said, for tokens to the local movie house. He says he loved *FLASH GORDON*, *The Three Stooges* and American cowboy flicks. He dropped out of school at age 13 and joined the Navy at 16. Stomach ulcers—which he blames on his inability to deal with discipline—got him discharged at 19. After attending a British Legion training school, he became a furniture polisher, which led to a job polishing coffins.

In 1955, while working in a London newspaper printing plant, he joined a body building club. His six-foot-two stature and rugged good looks got him jobs as a swimsuit model. When he entered the Mr. Universe competition the same year, he was invited to audition for the touring company of “*South Pacific*.” Connery wound up in the male chorus, going from town to town singing “*There is Nothing Like a Dame*,” he recalled with a laugh. He graduated to a small speaking part and, on the road, made up for lost school time. Every day for a year, in virtually every town, Connery hit the local library and read into a tape recorder. Back in London, he immersed himself in theatre by studying at the Old Vic.

He applied himself to repertory theatre and television work, making a mark for himself in a BBC presentation of “*Requiem for a Heavyweight*.” Then came a role opposite Claire Bloom in *ANNA KARENINA*. Signed to 20th Century-Fox, Connery appeared with Lana Turner and Barry Sullivan in *ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE*. He had just played a vicious killer in *TARZAN’S GREATEST ADVENTURE* when he got a call from two American producers—Albert Broccoli and Harry Saltzman—that would change his life forever. They had acquired the rights to several of Ian Fleming’s popular James Bond novels, and they were interested in seeing the young Scotsman.

For the role of Bond, however, the producers were considering more polished contenders, including Cary Grant, David Niven, Richard Burton, Trevor Howard, Peter Finch, James Mason, Roger Moore, and even Jim-

my Stewart. But in came Connery with that walk of his, a kind of fluid swagger that Broccoli later described as “the threatening grace of a panther on the prowl.” Poorly dressed and with his thick Scottish burr, Connery delivered his theory of Bond, pounded the desk to make his points, then sauntered out, leaving the two men dumbfounded.

“I used strong and commanding movements,” explained Connery of that fateful day. “Not with weight, but to show how Bond is always in control of a scene.” It worked. And so did his fee of only \$16,500.00, compared to the other big names who were just too big for the \$1 million budget of *DR. NO*.

Connery ran with the part, adding a blue-collar arrogance to the character written by Fleming as a more superbly efficient upper-class Brit. Connery also injected an ingredient largely alien to Fleming’s Bond: humor. It came in the form of teases—Miss Money Penny, the secretary of Bond’s boss being the most frequent target—and racy double entendres. In bed with yet another knockout dame in *GOLDFINGER*, Bond answers the phone and declines a

dinner invitation with “something big’s come up.” Connery’s Bond had a levity and innate cruelty, but was light-footed enough to roll with the campy punches—not to mention dagger-tipped kicks and razor-edged bowler hats.

“I look for humor in whatever I’m doing,” mused Connery, “as long as the humor fits the character and the story.” His early role models: Spencer Tracy, Cary Grant (“probably the most underrated actor to appear on screen”), Marlon Brando (“the most watchable of American actors”) and Sir Ralph Richardson. “I adored his acting,” he said. “He always found something quite humorous in his way of doing things.”

Students of pop culture attribute the 007 phenomenon to America’s need for a suave hero after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, who was himself an avid Ian Fleming fan. Not only did JFK list *Thunderball* as one of his favorite books back in 1960, but he even had Fleming over for dinner one night at his Georgetown residence. On the threshold of the sexual revolution in the ’60s, the Beatles

were taking care of the girls, but all women wanted Bond, and all men wanted to be Bond. The only exception was Connery himself. No matter how good he was at essaying the role, he was growing increasingly worried that he would be stamped as 007 forever, and was never at peace with the frenzied adulation and attention. On one occasion—while on location in Japan shooting *YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE*—Connery was at dinner and after retreating to the men’s room, he looked up from the urinal to find a photographer snapping photos of him relieving himself. For Connery, that was the last straw.

“The problem was that Bond was just so damn popular, the public only wanted to see me doing that,” Connery sighed. “All I can do now is what’s interesting and rewarding for me. To try to erase the image of Bond is next to impossible.”

Connery admitted the series became almost a straightjacket for him. The films often did not start shooting when they were supposed to and it was impossible to get a completion date, so Connery never knew when he might be free to make a non-Bond movie. And he desperately wanted to.

“For me, what became wrong with the Bond films was that they just got further and further into the technological stuff and science fiction stuff, which was not very interesting for me, really,” admitted Connery. “And they kind of lost the plot in terms of having some sort of story.”

But if he had to pick his favorite James Bond film? “I guess I’d have to say *FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE*—heavy on intrigue and light on technology,” said Connery.

After finally ripping up his license to kill after 1971’s *DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER*, Connery returned to Bond in the competitor’s 1983 attempt *NEVER SAY NEVER AGAIN*, but Connery came away from the experience disheartened. Connery said he’s constantly offered action scripts, “where it’s all action, action, action, right to the end. But my personal choice is for something much more than just that.” □

# 007

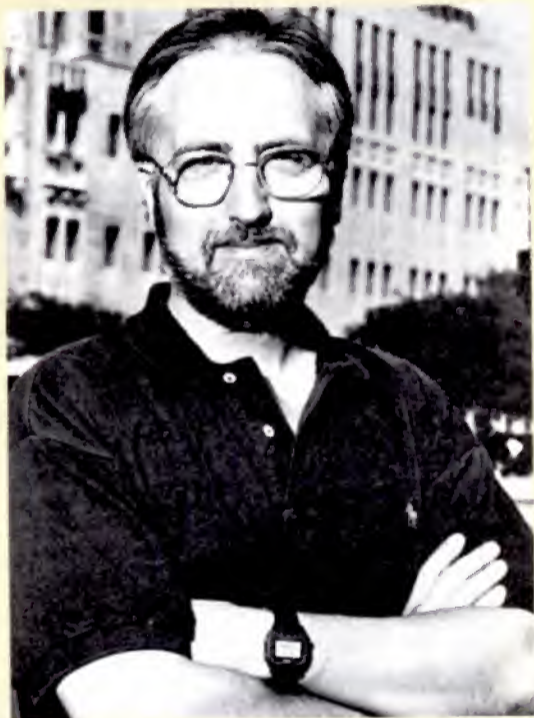
# NOVELIZING JAMES BOND

## The literary 007, from Ian Fleming to Raymond Benson.

By Rich Handley

For four decades, moviegoers have thrilled to James Bond's on-screen adventures, reveling in his world of fast cars, faster women, and deadly assassins. Film fans know Bond as a character larger than life, a man who dispatches attackers without spilling his martini, has a witty rejoinder for any situation, and gets any woman he wants. However, readers know a different version of the character. For them, the true James Bond is not the super-hero of Hollywood, but rather the dark, bitter, vice-ridden assassin Ian Fleming created in the 1953 novel *Casino Royale*.

Fleming's work had a moderate but devoted following, which rose dramatically when John F. Kennedy announced his fascination with the series. In total, he produced 12 novels and nine short stories about Bond, most of which have been filmed by Eon Productions. Upon his death, Kingsley Amis was hired to write a follow-up tale, *Colonel Sun*, but no other Bond novels appeared until 1981, when John Gardner brought Bond into the '80s with *License Renewed*. Though some bristled at changes made to Bond's character (Gardner made him younger than his actual age for credibility's sake



Benson, carrying on the Bond tradition of late creator Ian Fleming, while incorporating some of the movie series' innovations.

and borrowed several film elements), the novel met with success and Gardner went on to write 13 more original novels and two film novelizations before retiring in 1996.

Enter Raymond Benson, a West Texas-born composer, writer, and game designer whose encyclopedic *James Bond Bedside Companion* is widely regarded as the definitive book on the James Bond phenomenon. His role-playing adventure *YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE II: BACK OF BEYOND* was published by Victory Games as part of the James Bond 007 Role-Playing Game, and he also wrote text-based in-

teractive video games based on *GOLDFINGER* and *A VIEW TO A KILL*.

Benson was hired to continue writing the 007 novels in 1996. His first novel, *Zero Minus Ten*, appeared the following year and was serialized by *Playboy*, which also published his short story "Blast From the Past" that same year. He rounded out 1997 with the novelization of *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*. His second original novel, *The Facts of Death*, appeared in 1998 (also excerpted in *Playboy*), followed by a second short story, "Midsummer Night's Doom," a third original novel, *High Time to a Kill*, and the novelization of *THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH*, all in 1999.

Benson's original aspirations involved the theater. After graduating in 1978 from the University of Texas at Austin with a BFA in Directing, he moved to New York City and spent several years directing and composing music in the off-off-Broadway and off-Broadway arenas. Noted Benson, "One day, some friends and I were sitting around and the discussion came to 'What sort of book would you write if you had to?' My answer—a book about James Bond, mainly because I was so knowledgeable about the subject." His fa-



Sean Connery and Ian Fleming, 1963.

ther had taken him to see *GOLDFINGER* when he was nine years old, he said, which "hooked" him on Bond forever. Quickly devouring Fleming's novels by age 11, Benson kept up with "all things Bond" on into adulthood. Thus was born the *Companion*, which took three years to complete, and established him as a Bond expert worldwide.

While writing the book, and during his six years as Vice President of the American James Bond 007 Fan Club, Benson became friendly with Peter Janson-Smith at Glidrose Publications (the copyright holders to the literary Bond) and the Fleming family. He currently sits on the Board of Directors of the Ian Fleming Foundation, a not-for-profit organization run by Glidrose, the Fleming family, and Bond/Fleming enthusiasts, which procures, archives, and restores memorabilia associated with Fleming and Bond, their long-term goal to erect a permanent museum. These connections afforded him the chance to take over for Gardner.

Fleming served in the British Navy and was known to have been a womanizer and drinker like his famous super-spy, but Benson calls himself "a normal guy," adding, "I'll be the first to admit that I don't have some of the experiences in life that Ian



Inset: Singer Hoagy Carmichael, Fleming's inspiration for Bond.



Fleming had, but I think I'm able to draw upon the spirit and mood that he created and go my own way from there. A good imagination helps, I suppose. An author doesn't have to be an astronaut to write science fiction." To this end, Benson researches all locations appearing in his novels, and says he attempts to recreate the flavor of Fleming's famous restaurant menus, dining sequences, and detailed gambling scenes. "I travel to all the locations in my books that I can and experience a lot of stuff that ends up in the books. My wife read *Zero Minus Ten* and said, 'Wow, it's our trip to Hong Kong and China... only with danger!'"

This is one reason Benson prefers writing original material over writing film novelizations. "They're the author's work, from conception and storyline to the finished product. That's not to say that novelizations can't be fun. I had a blast doing *TOMORROW NEVER DIES*...the main difference, of course, is that the storyline, the 'outline,' so to speak, is given." His original work, he says, is much more involved. Glidrose requires an outline for each novel, which he considers extremely useful though he admits it's the most difficult part of the entire process. "My outlines are 15 pages or so of prose—broken

out chapter by chapter—describing everything that happens in the book. Coming up with a plot is extremely difficult because so much has already been done!" Once the outline is finished (which takes him two to three months), he travels, researches his locations, and then comes back to write the novel, which he delivers nearly nine months before publication. The entire process lasts about a year-and-a-half for each novel.

Benson has a vast canon to draw upon for his books. Preferring not to reference the role-playing game and comics based on James Bond, or the Christopher Wood novelizations of *MOONRAKER* and *THE SPY WHO LOVED ME*, he finds the 32 novels and story collections more than enough to remember. "It's harder than one would think, even for someone who knows the books fairly well. There are little mistakes here and there—we've all made them. Even Fleming!"

To illustrate, Benson cites *The Facts of Death*: "I had the head of the MI6 office in Athens as Stuart Thomas, who had been created by Kingsley Amis in *Colonel Sun*. What I forgot was that Stuart Thomas is 'missing and presumed dead,' a speculation buried somewhere in the last quarter

**RAYMOND BENSON**  
"I travel to all the locations and experience all the stuff that's in the books. My wife read *Zero Minus Ten* and said, 'Wow, it's our trip to Hong Kong and China... only with danger.'"

of that book!"

Luckily, Benson has the freedom to pick and choose what to use or ignore from prior books, so such minor errors are not a big problem. For instance, though Gardner made Bond a Captain in *Win, Lose or Die*, Benson felt "Commander Bond" sounded better and demoted him again. "There was an explanation somewhere that indicated that

Bond's promotion to Captain was only temporary for that assignment," recalled Benson, "but I think it got edited out from wherever it was."

What has been problematic is Bond's age. Fleming's Bond served in World War II, and yet Benson is supposed to be writing about the same character! Benson (and Gardner before him) chose to deal with this dilemma the same way Eon has in the films—namely, to ignore it altogether. "We're dealing with an ageless Bond now... characters like Bond go through time warps as they continue over the years. Superman and Batman have been around since the '30s—talk about old!"

Bond's age is not the only aspect in which Benson's books have paralleled the movies; another is plot, something Benson admits freely. "The influence of the Bond films on my books is unavoidable. And yes, I do attempt to inject some flavor of the films into them intentionally. There are many readers who are not familiar with the original novels and only know Bond from the films. They expect some of the more fantastic elements: the gadgetry, the action. Glidrose and the publishers, I think, feel these things need to be there as well. It's a stylistic approach that we all agree

on."

Benson considers himself a "purist," preferring Fleming's original novels to the filmed versions. He would welcome the chance to write a Bond film and grants, "You can't argue with success. The films are what made Bond the icon he is today, and they're what initially got me into Bond. I love the films, even the ones that are not-so-great."

Whether or not Benson will get to write a James Bond screenplay, he enjoys being Ian Fleming's successor on the novels. He's satisfied with his financial compensation; he's happy having such artistic freedom; he maintains that none of his ideas have been rejected by Glidrose; and he's grateful for the privilege of chronicling the adventures of a character who has fascinated him his whole life. As such, it's no wonder that he plans to continue to write James Bond books. "As long as they'll have me!" □

Benson's latest Bond adventure. The author turns out a book a year for Glidrose, Fleming's literary heirs.



# 007

# GEORGE LAZENBY

## The one-time James Bond star looks back on his controversial stint as 007.

By Rich Handley

Everything seemed familiar in 1969 as hordes of excited fans viewed for the very first time the opening of *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*, the sixth entry in the James Bond film series. Eon Productions had made five highly-acclaimed Bond films to date, and if first impressions meant anything, this looked to be another success. A new face, a new voice—but authentic Bond, nonetheless.

He was the Bond from Down Under. Born in September 1939, George Lazenby grew up an active child in his homeland of Australia. Following military service and a brief stint as a car salesman, he headed out to London in 1964 (the year Bond creator Ian Fleming died), where his rugged looks and strong build helped him make a name for himself as a model. He hadn't always wanted to be a screen actor, but when Sean Connery announced his resignation from the Bond films, he knew his chance for fame had arrived.

At the time, Lazenby's acting experience was limited to a series of television commercials for Big Fry Chocolates, and his competition included actors Robert Campbell, Hans de Vries, Anthony Rogers, and John Richardson. However, this did not deter him from trying. "I got the role of James Bond," he recalls, "by walking, very determinedly, into Eon's offices in Audley Square and having the balls to convince Harry Saltzman I was the real 007. Of course, it did not hurt to be



Lazenby as Bond in 1969's *ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE*, one of the series' best, an athletic 007 helmed by former stunt supervisor Peter Hunt.

wearing a suit made by Sean Connery's own tailor from Saville Row, [or to have had the same barber as producer Cubby Broccoli]. I was hell-bent on being the next James Bond. The authentic James Bond 007." Mentally, said Lazenby, he was very focused. "I knew what I wanted and demanded it, just as Bond would do. And, physically, I was never stronger. I loved the films and knew, in my heart of hearts, I could do the role."

Producer Charles Feldman, while considering a serious adaptation of Ian Fleming's *CASINO ROYALE*, once offered the role of James Bond to Cary Grant. Howard Hawks was set to direct, but Grant turned them down, saying any

actor who followed Connery would be asking for disaster. Lazenby denies such misgivings when he went into Saltzman's office. "I picked up the challenge. I will always be very happy I did."

Lazenby never compared himself to Connery and eschews such comparisons in general. "I looked for James Bond in Ian Fleming's novels," said Lazenby. "Bond is tall, dark, saturnine, with cruel good looks. I wanted to do that role very much. Once I convinced myself I was James Bond—and it wasn't too difficult—I went after it!"

Lazenby convinced not only himself but Eon as well, and found himself cast as the second official James Bond. The film is

often praised for its intense chase scenes, its vibrant musical score, and Lazenby's extremely physical performance as Bond. Unlike the prior films, *OHMSS* focused on Bond's sensitive side, and is usually known as "the one where Bond got married."

"We followed Ian Fleming's story and locale very closely," Lazenby remembered. "The film has a depth and feel like none other in the Bond series up to that time. I believe *OHMSS* as a motion picture stands up today. It is certainly a classic in its genre: excellent pace, solid direction by Peter Hunt, riveting music score by John Barry, absolutely beautiful Technicolor cinematography of the Swiss Alps." He considers Richard Maibaum's screenplay and Maurice Binder's opening titles among the best in the series.

The producers were initially nervous about the audience's reaction to the change in actors, so a gag was inserted into the opening sequence, in which Bond saved a beautiful woman only to have her steal his car and leave without falling into his arms. Surprised, he turned to the camera, smiled, and said, "This never happened to the other fellow." A priceless moment, it allowed Lazenby and the producers to make light of the change from Connery and then move on.

All told, Lazenby found working on the film a "wonderful experience." Despite rumors that he disliked his co-stars, he dismissed the idea. "Everyone treated me very well, contrary to some things that may have been



Infiltrating Blofeld's allergy clinic in the Alps: the film had all the Bond ingredients, but Lazenby had the bad luck to follow Sean Connery in the role.

printed in the past." Specifically, he denounced the idea that anyone in the cast resented his replacing Connery. "Solid actors like the late Bernard Lee, who played M, and Lois Maxwell, who was Miss Moneybags, were too experienced and far too professional to ruin a good show by such negative behavior. Lois Maxwell once called me 'a hoot,' and thank goodness she said it in a very complimentary way. I now wish to return the compliment and tell Lois she's a hoot, too! Beautiful lady—very under-rated actress, very professional."

As for sources claiming Lazenby and co-star Diana (AVENGERS) Rigg hated each other, he scoffed, "Forget those foul rumors, eh! She will always be 'my darling Tracy.' A good friend, then and now.... she's one of the greatest English-speaking actresses on the planet."

Lazenby is also quick to denounce reports of a feud with the current Bond, Pierce Brosnan, who has expressed interest in filming a remake of ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE. "Such nonsense makes for good copy in the tabloids," said Lazenby. "We are a small fraternity, the five of us who have portrayed James Bond, 007." One might say they share a special... bond.

After OHMSS, Lazenby says

his life changed. "Everyone started over-charging me from the get-go," he recalled. "Everything was suddenly six times more expensive than it was before playing Bond. Everyone wanted me to be 007, not just portray him on screen. I understand Connery went through an awful lot of that, too." Not one to dwell on the negative, though, Lazenby added, "The positive side is that Bond always gets the beautiful girl and the best tables in the house. One can quickly learn to appreciate Dom Perignon '73 and Beluga caviar, north of the Caspian!"

Friends close to Lazenby have suggested his career might have been different had his first outing been DIAMONDS ARE FOREVER. Though he has not seen the film, or any others in the series since then, he agrees. "I understand it was a romp for Sean Connery and that there were many comic elements in that film. A few people in the business have suggested that OHMSS was too dark a film to launch the career of a new actor, especially an unknown, in the role of James Bond, primarily because of the ending where Bond's wife, Tracy, is murdered by Blofeld. It was a down ending—a serious ending—and it may have left those Bond fans wanting another GOLDFINGER a little depressed."

## GEORGE LAZENBY

**"I got the role of Bond by walking into Eon's office and having the balls to convince Harry Saltzman I was the real 007. It didn't hurt to be wearing a suit made by Sean Connery's own tailor."**

Another factor working against him was simple timing. Connery had done five films prior, and fans associated him with Bond. These days, it's normal, even expected, for different actors to take over the role, but in 1969 no one had yet experienced such a change, and some refused to accept anyone but Connery. He admits things might have gone differently had he been the third actor in the role rather than the second, but says he has no regrets and is concerned only with his career today.

Following OHMSS, Eon was impressed enough to offer Lazenby a seven-year contract worth millions of dollars, but he declined. Walking away from success is not easy, and many have questioned his decision. Why, then, did he leave after only one film? "Bad business advice," said Lazenby. "Plain and simple. Nothing more. I was not fired from the series [as some sources have erroneously claimed]. I listened to the wrong people. I left of my own accord, but in retrospect, I must now accept what Cary Grant once said: that a film actor cannot become a real star until he has at least ten starring pictures under his belt."

Since then, Lazenby has more than tripled that number, appearing in films such as THE MAN FROM HONG KONG, GETTYSBURG, THE KENTUCKY FRIED MOVIE, UNIVERSAL SOLDIER, and most recently, FOUR DOGS PLAYING POKER.

Rumors have circulated that Lazenby has been in talks to play Bond once again if the rival Bond producer Kevin McClory ever gets his WARHEAD 2000 remake of THUNDERBALL off the ground.

Lazenby preferred not to comment on such rumors, but noted he is ready to play Bond again after 30 years. "I am in top physical condition and work

out vigorously every day. I'm ten years younger than Sean Connery, you know. And, in the years since I completed OHMSS, I have trained hard as a professional actor."

Though he departed after only one film, George Lazenby left his mark on the James Bond films. References to Bond's marriage have cropped up in THE SPY WHO LOVED ME, FOR YOUR EYES ONLY, and LICENSE TO KILL, and nostalgic fans will recognize the title of THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH as the motto on Bond's coat-of-arms, seen in ON HER MAJESTY'S SECRET SERVICE. OHMSS, once a "forgotten" Bond film, is now receiving wide acclaim from video audiences free of the bias it once faced in theaters, and comments on Lazenby's performance have largely been positive in such fan forums as alt.fan.james-bond. This may not have happened to the other fellow... but you won't find George Lazenby wasting time on regrets. □

Lazenby and Diana Rigg as the love of Bond's life, a nicely dramatic story adapted from the Ian Fleming gospel.



# ANIMAL FARM

## Orwell classic gets Hallmarked by Henson's Creature Shop.

By Dan Scapperotti

Perhaps no science fiction writer has been more prophetic than George Orwell, who died in 1950 after publishing his novel *1984*, which foretold of the revisionist schemes of a totalitarian government. While the nature of the beast has changed from a dictatorship to the god of political correctness, the revisionists today are at work changing books, films and tampering with history. Orwell's 1945 novel *Animal Farm* was an allegory for the Russian Revolution, which merely overthrew one totalitarian regime for another. The dark novel was adapted to the screen as an animated feature in 1955. TNT will broadcast a new film version of the novel October 15.

Technology now has enabled filmmakers to create a live action version of Orwell's tale. In 1996, Robert Halmi, chairman of Hallmark Entertainment, commissioned a script for *ANIMAL FARM*. John Stephenson, who had headed Jim Henson's Creature Shop for 15 years and had recently worked on *BABE*, was hired to direct the project.

"The first draft of the script was interesting and exciting," he said, "but it was a long way away from the original Orwell



Former Henson Creature Shop supervisor John Stephenson (l), making his TV-movie directing debut for TNT, with producer Greg Smith.

concept. It had some nice stuff in it but it was much more towards Disney than it was towards George Orwell. One has to be mindful of the responsibility and, although it is a very simple concept that Orwell is putting across, you have to make sure you do that right. We wanted it to be much more hard-hitting. Actually it might be darker now than originally so we rewrote it and put back into the script what we considered the right flavor for Orwell.

"It's very dark, but also quite funny in places. There's a rat in it who is basically a comic character. There's a lot of black humor in it. There's a lot of ridiculousness that goes on because animals are trying to be humans, so there are lots of oppor-

tunities to show how ridiculous that can be and how ridiculous humans can be. Although it's dark, people laugh at it, but then also understand the sinister side of it."

Admittedly, Stephenson has taken several liberties in adapting the story to the screen. "In order to give it the right format we gave the script a much stronger protagonist in the shape of the sheep dog," said the director. "The whole story now is attached to the actions of the dog, a dog called Jesse who is mentioned but is only a minor

character in the book. Now Jesse becomes our heroine. Jesse is played by Julia Ormond. All the things that happen in the book happen to Jesse who takes us through the story. We identify with her.

"The brilliance of Orwell had very much to do with the fact that he managed to personify the basic instincts of humanity in his characters. Each one of those characters is incredibly conceived so we wanted to hang on to the essence of those characters first and foremost.

"We took a second liberty at the end. Since so much has happened since 1945 when the book was published we needed to add a piece on the end which kind of brings it up to date."

Several special effects tech-

niques were employed to bring the barnyard characters to life. "It could possibly be the most difficult film anybody could ever want to do," said the director.

"There's a huge amount of CG animation, but there is also a lot of 2D animation. There are real animals in the piece and there is a lot of animatronics. The Creature Shop did the 12 animatronic characters. Then we used a company called Cinesite which is based in Los Angeles and London. They did all the post-production effects which included a lot of compositing. Bear in mind that the animals that we used were generally not as well trained as you'd get anywhere else in the world. And in order to get more than one or two animals in a shot was relatively impossible so we had to composite when we had a group of animals involved. There's also a lot of wire and cable removal. They also supplied CG animals. There are a lot of CG birds and pigs and there is a CG rat in it, all done by Cinesite. Then there's a lot of 2D work which is used to enhance the lip syncing of the animatronics."

All the events revolve around the farm, including the two battles which become major set pieces in the film, the initial revolt and the second battle when the men try and re-invade the farm. There is an extensive







**“Napoleon [the pig based on Joseph Stalin] is the arch criminal.” said director John Stephenson, “Patrick Stewart did that very well. He’s horrible throughout.”**

neering, very arrogant but supposedly wise. Peter Ustinov was a perfect choice. I suppose the nearest to Old Major that I can think of in terms of characterization would be Winston Churchill.”

Joseph Stalin became Napoleon, the pig who seizes

dist,” said Stephenson of the character voiced by Ian Holm. “He’s sly and has a fantastic use of the English language so he can be very, very persuasive. He is Napoleon’s right-hand man and manages to explain everything away to the animals until the very last minute. In fact in my film he goes so far as to produce his own propaganda film footage which he shows to the animals in the barn. There is a film within a film.”

Snowball (Kelsey Grammer) would be Trotsky, the intellectual idealist who saw the ideals of the Russian Revolution debased by the Bolsheviki who overthrew the provisional government in the Bolshevik Revolution. “Snowball is very earnest,” said Stephenson. “He’s like the most boring science teacher you’ve ever come across. He basically believes in the revolution and the commandments which have been laid down by Old Major. At the beginning of the revolution when the animals have taken over the barn it’s Snowball really who leads the way and tries to teach the animals how to read and write and be responsible for themselves. Kelsey Grammer was fantastic—he was really great to work with.”

The voice characterizations were actually done three separate times. Before the start of filming, Stephenson used a group of Irish actors to do a radio play of the entire film. Later, during production the puppeteers themselves recorded the voices as they manipulated the animatronic animals. Finally, he had the main voice actors in who then worked with the voices that the puppeteers had already laid down. The final voices were recorded both in Los Angeles and London.

Once ANIMAL FARM premieres on TNT, it will go into general theatrical release in Europe. □

The animals attack, with effects provided by Henson and augmented with the latest CGI technology.

sequence when the animals build the windmill and the destruction of the structure later in the film. All of this was filmed in Ireland.

“There were lots of reasons to go to Ireland,” said Stephenson. “One of the reasons was that we needed to find a location which we could basically do everything in. We had to build a studio, and stables for like a hundred different animals. We had to house a huge crew of animatronic people and needed to have production offices. We wanted to have a location that encompassed all of that activity and shoot the whole film, build the sets and do the interiors there without moving. We had a rather huge circus to move so if we started moving around the country from location to location it would have been very difficult.”

In order to help the audience suspend their disbelief and enter the world of the animals, Stephenson gave the film a new look. “Another device I used in the film,” he advised, “is the world that the pigs and the animals live in. In order to make them believable and for us to believe that an animal is talking in English you have to create a fantasy place for it to be so you can let your imagination allow that to happen. I decided to cre-



ate a fantasy world by making it kind of super or hyper real.”

The voice characterizations were supplied by a number of well known actors. Pete Postlethwaite plays Farmer Jones. Veteran Peter Ustinov plays Old Major, Orwell’s version of Karl Marx. “He is this huge massive pig,” said Stephenson. “He’s a boar in both senses of the word. He’s like a retired major. Very domi-

control of the farm and eventually the animals who live and work there. “He is the arch criminal,” the director continued. “He’s unredeemably awful. Patrick Stewart did that very well. He’s horrible throughout the whole thing. He’s very unpleasant, very aggressive, very domineering, a brute, a bully a coward. All of those things.

“Squealer is the propagan-

Wrangling Henson’s animatronics on the set in Ireland. Stephenson used L.A.’s Cinesite for CGI work. TNT airs the ambitious Hallmark adaptation October 15.



# CHILDREN OF THE CORN 666

**The latest video sequel, goes back to the original film's roots in Stephen King.**

By Dan Scapperotti

The horror franchise is not dead. Witness the vibrant re-birth of Chucky last year. The dreaded cult of children dreamed up by Stephen King for his 1984 novella has gone into its fifth sequel. After a rash of less-than-inspired sequels, *CHILDREN OF THE CORN* returns to its roots. It's 20 years later, and the original kids who worshiped He Who Walks Behind the Rows have grown up. One, played by Nancy Allen, desperately sent her daughter away when she was an infant hoping to save her from the malignancy surrounding the town of Gatlin. Unfortunately, the girl is back. The Buena Vista Home Video hits store shelves

Stacy Keach as the town doctor in the sequel, which Buena Vista Home Video releases to stores October 19.



John Franklin as Isaac menaces Nancy Allen, one of the original "children," grown up and with a daughter to protect from He Who Walks Behind the Rows.

October 19, just in time for Halloween.

Producers Bill Barry and Jeff Geoffray tapped director Kari Skogland to helm the latest entry, with the devilish title *CHILDREN OF THE CORN 666*.

Skogland, whose film credits include *THE SIZE OF WATERMELONS*, *MEN WITH GUNS* and *WHITE LIES*, said that horror is a genre she wouldn't usually be drawn to, but she saw it as a challenge. "I have to admit I'd be lying if I told you I was a big fan," she said, "although as a kid I sure as hell watched a lot of them. Dimension contacted me because they wanted to make a slightly different, more unique horror film.

So I wanted to give it a try. I met with the writers, Tim Sulka and John Franklin. What interested me was that the first *CHILDREN OF THE CORN* was based on a Stephen King short story. This is the sequel to that first one. All the other ones which kind of have their own life, own look, were not relevant to this story. This story was literally Isaac. The first *CHILDREN OF THE CORN* was scary as hell. John Franklin, one of the writers, was in the first show. He played the original Isaac and I wanted to work with John. The mandate was to make a horror film that was smarter and cooler and more happening. Who could turn that down?

"Isaac returns. Isaac wakes up. When we left the first film, Isaac was kind of captured by the anti-Christ and left in a coma in his mortal world. This world is a desolate town, kind of a purgatory. We're not sure whether we're in the real world or not and it doesn't really matter, but it's got this sort of surrealistic quality to it. This is now about the children of the children, because they're all grown up now. The few that are left have been in a kind of limbo. This again is about an extremist group and what happens. How the people who have power only have it because people give it to them—not that they have it by divine right. In the case of the extremist group, the leader only has the power that the group gives him. It has a sub-text about choice and making choices.

"A girl who was one of the children of the children, but who was adopted and brought up outside of that town and who knows nothing of her past, is having visions and is compelled to go back to Gatlin, Nebraska and find out where she came from. On this journey, because there was a fate and kind of a destiny thing intertwined with her return, we discover that she walks into a supernatural vortex. Isaac wakes up and ultimately a battle of the Titans unfolds. The real power, the real divinity, who is someone we never expected to be, has been

DIRECTOR KARI SKOGLAND

**“I wanted it to be different, to look different. The supernatural quality of it is grounded in reality. The characters carry it. We’re not relying on a computer for special effects.”**



John Franklin as Isaac in the 1984 original. Franklin reprises his role as the demonic preacher and co-wrote the script for the new direct-to-video sequel.

lying in wait for her. He wants her to be the mother of a superior race and plunge the planet into chaos and come out with evil reigning.

“I also wanted to walk the line there because the god, the character that ultimately plays the deity, is not good nor bad. He’s kind of like God but there is a ying and yang to him. It’s Isaac, who chose to interpret the words of this god, who is evil because of the interpretation. By virtue of interpreting he put himself above others and that in itself was evil and, of course, power corrupts and he becomes corrupted. When he wakes up he’s no less corrupted, so the whole thing starts all over again. This girl goes on a journey into this town and gets embroiled in the madness and escapes and ends up ultimately

okay, but forever changed.”

Since Skogland wanted to have the film story-driven, there are few spectacular effects sequences. As a matter of fact, most of the effects were done in camera. “I wanted it to be different,” she said, “to look different. I wanted the supernatural quality of it grounded in reality. So it wasn’t a computer-driven movie. It was a reality-driven movie. What that allowed was the characterization to come through. The characters had to carry the supernatural quality of it, so we’re not relying on a computer to put in the special effects. The third act is a complete mind-blower.”

The absence of CGI effects doesn’t preclude some impressive action sequences, Skogland is quick to point out. “We had a lot of stunts, car-driving stunts

and some fire effects at the end. The whole end sequence was very difficult to do because like anything you’re always running against the time of the shooting. I wanted to jump into the genre and have all the classic moments. You’re in the boiler room of the hospital and have it look like the classic boiler room. But then I wanted to twist the genre on its heels. In order to do that you need wonderful performances, which we got from everybody. We also had a flying rig for when the deity does his thing. I did not want the overt violence of people against people. There’s no way you can avoid violence in a horror film, so the violence ultimately was people doing it to themselves. I think four people kill themselves. Isaac kills one person and that’s the first person he kills. He has ordered people to kill, but he has never killed himself, so I wanted it to have a moral basis.”

Filming in Los Angeles did present a small problem for the director. Where do you find a cornfield in November? “Believe it or not there are two small cornfields in Los Angeles,” Skogland advised. “It was some very tricky shooting to make those cornfields look like fields upon fields upon fields of corn, but we did it. You’ll never know we’re not in the middle of Nebraska or wherever it’s supposed to take place.”

Nancy Allen and Stacy Keach lead the adult cast. “Stacy brought a lot to the party,” said Skogland. “He plays the doctor. He’s the guy who hung around because he had no place else to go. He’s not part of the group, he’s not evil, but he’s also not a character that does good. He’s just there. He doesn’t judge. Nancy Allen plays the mother of the girl who returns to find her heritage. She was one of the children of the corn and she had a daughter whom she spirited out of Gatlin with

the help of the doctor some 19 years before. She goes on an emotional journey because the daughter, whom she would have loved to have brought up, comes back. She wants to scare her away because she doesn’t want her to have anything to do with the town because then it will all start up again.

“John Franklin, of course, played Isaac. He’s a wonderful performer who is evil incarnate. Paul Popowich plays the lead love interest. Natalie Ramsey, who plays the lead actress, is gorgeous and young and fresh and gave an honest performance that is endearing. She looks like a young Sharon Stone. She has a nice vulnerability about her as well as an international beauty.”

If Skogland had to cut the trailer for the sixth CHILDREN OF THE CORN saga, what would she emphasize? “I’d emphasize the evil of Isaac and the vulnerability of the girl who ultimately defeats him.” □

The deity behind the horror levitates, a supernatural presence whose godlike power is twisted by Isaac for evil.



Franklin and sequel director Kari Skogland, who actually found a cornfield located in Los Angeles to double for King’s ominous Gatlin, Nebraska setting.



# MODERN VAMPIRES

By Dennis Fischer

Cult director Richard Elfman (*FORBIDDEN ZONE*; *SHRUNKEN HEADS*) and writer Matthew Bright (*GUN CRAZY*; *FREEWAY*) have combined to provide a very modern, outrageous take on vampires in *MODERN VAMPIRES*, starring Casper Van Dien (*STARSHIP TROOPERS*), Natasha Gregson Wagner (*TWO GIRLS AND A GUY*), and Rod Steiger (*GUILTY AS CHARGED*; *THE AMITYVILLE HORROR*).

In it, Van Dien plays Dallas, an American fighter pilot who was downed in Transylvania during World War II whose existence was spared by Old World vampires who used him to get their green cards. An exploitation satire set in modern-day Los Angeles, Dallas discovers that the city is run by Count Dracula (Robert Pastorelli from *CRACKER*) himself, who keeps an entourage of bodyguards and runs a night club that specially caters to the undead. Meanwhile, this handsome outsider is attracted to another outsider, Nico (Wagner), a prostitute vampire known in the press as the Hollywood slasher. In a perverse twist on the tale of Pygmalion, Dallas must teach Nico what she needs to know to become a socially acceptable vampiress.

Originally lensed as *REVENANT*, which is the film's European title (it means either a person who returns after a long absence, or a person who returns as a spirit after death—both of which apply here), Sterling Entertainment has retitled the film *MODERN VAMPIRES* for its American run on video this Halloween.

Screenwriter Matthew Bright has a long-time association with Elfman, going back to his being Elfman's bassist in their group the Mystic Knights of the Oingo Boingo, whom brother Danny later transformed into the rock band Oingo Boingo. Bright had co-

## Director Richard Elfman on bringing Dracula to L.A.



Vampire makeup by Sota Effects, as staked bloodsuckers have the life force sucked out of them. Elfman's film has opened world-wide as *REVENANT*.

written Richard Elfman's earlier forays into genre filmmaking and has since become a director himself, on *FREEWAY* and *CONFESSIONS OF A TRICK BABY*.

Regarding *MODERN VAMPIRES*, Elfman said, "This was originally his script, although he got a little pissed at me for changes that I made. Whatever I do, I have to put it through my own mental meat-grinder and make it come out my way. I always rewrite everything I do. It drives writers crazy. I think it has my look and my stamp. His original version was much darker. I'd say go see *FREEWAY*, and that's like pure Matthew Bright. His original script was darker, and he felt that I watered it down, but it's already so edgy that I am awaiting my crucifixion after it comes out."

A combination of both an art film and

an exploitation film with a wickedly twisted sense of humor, *MODERN VAMPIRES* has plenty to dismay the squeamish. In addition to the requisite stakings and blood-lettings, there are kinky sex scenes and vampire sex scenes, and a vampire club filled with naked caged humans ready for the taking, and so-called monkey tables where victims are strapped in to await a surgical saw and vampire feasting on the freely flowing life fluid. For these decadent vampires, representative of the amoral and hedonistic elements in our culture, the night life is more than good, it's great.

"It's a fun film, but it's also a dark social satire," commented Elfman truthfully. "It juxtaposes race, ethnicity, economics, life in Los Angeles, and a lot of satire of Hollywood. [The vampires are] hip, they're chic, they're beautiful, and they suck blood. Generally, it's the whole vampire thing, of people who have no morality but just live for their own pleasure, their own success, and their own survival. And they thrive in Los Angeles.

"I started with a completely original, wacked-out script. It's really an offbeat, dark, sociological comedy with a lot of music, and the characters just happen to be vampires. It's not a typical vampire story at all. We've got these chic, very amoral vampires that kind of run L.A. by night versus the religious and conservative Van Helsing who unwittingly enlists Crips from South Central Los Angeles to charge up into the Chateau Marmont to kill vampires. You don't see that one every day."

From the very first, Elfman wanted Van Dien to play Dallas. "I thought he was the perfect American vampire," he said. "He was cool and hip, and the women just go crazy for him. He's one of the most amazing guys to work with. This guy's a gentleman, every atom of his being is a gentleman. He'll injure himself after a stunt,



**MURPHY BROWN's Robert Pastorelli plays Dracula, who runs the underworld in modern-day Los Angeles from a nightclub that caters to the undead. "We didn't want to do a stereotypical Dracula," said Elfman.**

won't tell anybody, do three more takes, no complaints."

According to Elfman, Dallas is "your all-American hero. He's a pretty straight guy, ethical, sense of courage. It's just an irony that he was a young pilot in World War II who was shot down over the Transylvania mountains, and the vampires rescued him, changing him to help get green cards. So here is this kind of courageous, American clean-cut action hero that's made into a vampire but he's still the same guy with a sense of integrity. He's a good guy, but he's a vampire now."

Complicating the vampires' lives is an Austrian Dr. Van Helsing played by Rod Steiger. Van Helsing has kept up the family tradition of being a vampire hunter; however, he has become especially dedicated after a vampire transformed his own son (depicted as a kind of overgrown Hitler youth) into a vampire, forcing Van Helsing to release his own child from the undead state, leaving him with constant nightmares and creating a heavily conflicted character.

"I was really lucky to get Rod Steiger," proclaimed Elfman. "I'd been a fan of his since I was a kid, and he has a wry sense to him. Even when he does tragedy or something very serious, sometimes there's a little smile in the corner of his mouth. This guy has layers to spare. I just went to Barcelona with him to a festival—funny guy with a wealth

of experience and stories. He works very well with other actors, too. Very generous, even with the youngest, greenest actors on the set."

Robert Pastorelli who plays the film's trendy Count Dracula is primarily a New York actor. He was the painter on MURPHY BROWN and he had a critically acclaimed show last year called CRACKER. Commented Elfman, "The allure for him was working with Rod Steiger. He was a guy with a hit TV show and I'm asking him to work for minimum wage, like begging hat in hand, and it was really Rod Steiger that attracted him. Although, he was cool. We didn't want to do a stereotypical Dracula, and this guy, he's an original. Everything he does is original with his own flavor and his own stamp, and that's one of the other things that I love about Robert Pastorelli. What a deliciously evil character he

**Rod Steiger as Van Helsing enlists the Crips from South Central L.A. to fight the vampires. "It's a dark social satire of life in Los Angeles," said Elfman.**



**“It’s a fun film, but also a dark social satire. It juxtaposes race, ethnicity, economics, life in Los Angeles and a lot of the satire of Hollywood.”**

*—Director Richard Elfman—*

[plays].”

Additionally, the film features Dallas' vampire friends, Richard (Craig Ferguson), Vincent (Udo Kier), Ulrike (Kim Cattrall), and Panthia (Natasha Andreichenko), all of whom are provided with a biting wit for this fang-in-cheek vampire story. Ferguson, who plays the English boss on the DREW CAREY SHOW, almost steals the show as a flippantly evil bloodsucker out for a good time. Elfman called Ferguson, "a marvelous Scottish actor, and a delight to work with. He was very busy with the DREW CAREY SHOW too, and couldn't have been more accommodating for us to show up at times that were awkward. But he was always there for me. He's one of those guys who's a joker on the set and really keeps the mood up even on long, hard, cold nights."

Casting Udo Kier is a bit of an in-joke given Kier's previous experience as the star of BLOOD FOR DRACULA (aka ANDY WARHOL'S DRACULA), and Kier's character Vincent becomes Van Helsing's first victim in the film. "I've been a fan of everything that Udo has ever done, and that's one of my all-time favorite movies," said Elfman. "I told him, 'Udo, I've been waiting 20 years to drive a stake through your heart.' He's also a delightful man to work with. Even when he does tragedy, he's playing comedy at the same time. Just a delightful actor."

One of Elfman's directorial choices is to have a rapid montage of images whenever a vampire bites someone. Explained Elfman,

"That shows what's internally going on in the vampire's mind when they get that rush of blood, because [to them] the blood is sex, it's drugs, it's speed, it's everything."

Like other amoral characters in Los Angeles, these vampires entrap and ensnare the wannabes who look to the powerful to get their dreams realized. However, noted Elfman, "You'll notice that none of the victims are sympathetic characters. We wanted to keep a little sympathy for the vampires. [You're supposed to think] My God, that guy almost deserves it." □

## THE BLAIR WITCH VS. THE HAUNTING: Suggestive Scares Upstage Silly CGI.

Is it the "new face of movie horror?" No. Is it the "best horror film of the 1990s?" No. Is it the "year's scariest movie?" No. Is it "breathhtakingly original and relentlessly frightening?" Well, no to the first and yes (at least sometimes) to the second.

Actually, **THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT** (Artisan, 7/99, 1:27, R) is a very good, sometimes even excellent horror film that has been over-hyped by well-meaning critics who have set the film up to be a tremendous disappointment to the millions of people who saw it *after* reading the reviews. The problem is that most critics, for all their pseudo-intellectual snobbery, have the same lowest common denominator tastes as the rest of us, so they really do enjoy a good scare; however, they can't admit that—unless the film also provides some kind of artsy hook on which to hang praise. The faux-documentary format of **BLAIR WITCH** provided just such a hook, and critics raced to heap a heavy burden that the film could not possibly support: that the film proved the superiority of suggested over explicit horror; that the film proved the major studios had forgotten how to make good horror films; that the film is the "most original horror film since...HALLOWEEN."

That comparison is a little more apt, although not in the way intended by Jonathan Foreman in the *New York Post*. **HALLOWEEN** was hardly original (being an amalgam of **PSYCHO** and **THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE**), but it was effective. Likewise, the basic plot of **BLAIR WITCH** (three documentarians disappear into the wilds, and a year later their footage is found, revealing their fate) is derivative of **CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST**.

How, then, to explain the hype? Well, the film succeeds at using a few simple virtues often absent from recent genre work. A sense of reality is maintained throughout, in terms of characterization and fine performances from Heather Donahue, Michael Williams, and Joshua Leonard; there is no nudge-

**Co-creators Dan Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez use the power of suggestion in THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT.**



In the ill-conceived remake of **THE HAUNTING**, Lili Taylor (l) and Catherine Zeta-Jones watch the subtle scares evaporate in a haze of CGI special effects.

nudge, wink-wink to the audience that this is "only a movie." The threat from without (the unseen Blair Witch) is used at strategic intervals (mostly at night) to evoke terror, but writer-directors Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez are wise enough to know that's not enough to sustain an entire movie (even one that clocks in at under an hour-and-a-half). Instead, they carefully dramatize the disintegration of the group during the daylight hours, undermining the sense of comfort that comes from solidarity in the face of adversity. And they use a carefully orchestrated series of suggestions to convey the menace haunting (or hunting) the characters, without every really showing anything. (These latter two elements are very similar to the approach used by Robert Wise in **THE HAUNTING**, more on which later). And finally, the mock-documentary style absolves them from having to maintain the kind of top-notch production values that could not possibly be achieved on their low budget: the sloppy camera work, grainy images, and absence of dramatic music all end up working *for*, rather than *against*, the film.

Having said all that, the film is never relentless. The night scenes of the frightened trio are effectively suspenseful, but the only truly overwhelming sense of dread does not emerge until the final minutes, when the surviving characters bring their cameras within the horror house whose atrocities are responsible for the Blair Witch legend. Even these scenes, when considered in retrospect, stretch credibility somewhat, using the cinematic equivalent of that hoary literary device: just as those Lovecraftian narrators kept pen to paper until the monster literally had its fangs in their flesh, these filmmakers keep their fingers on the camera button right up until their last breaths. The film also sorely lacks some kind of framing device to explain how the film was found and what the

finders make of it. (I know this was in the pseudo-behind-the-scenes story **THE MAKING OF THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT**, broadcast on Sci-Fi Channel the week before the film opened, but I think works of art should stand on their own, without support from material in a different medium.)

When all is said and done, **THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT** remains a remarkable and entertaining film, well-deserving of praise. Meanwhile, just when I was starting to grow tired of its relentless hype, along came a point of comparison that made the critical kudos seem much less excessive: **THE HAUNTING** (DreamWorks, 7/99, 1:52, PG-13) is nowhere near as big a disaster as last year's **PSYCHO** remake, but it is nearly as redundant, offering no new insight or entertainment that comes even close to justifying a new adaptation of a novel that was brilliantly filmed the first time.

Surprisingly, Jan DeBont (whose action expertise in **SPEED** and **TWISTER** would seem to peg him as a piece of directorial miscasting) follows the format of his predecessor, at least for the film's first half. With the emphasis on atmosphere and characterization, the remake actually shows some early promise. When the inevitable CGI effects first kick in, they attempt a certain subtlety, suggesting faces glimpsed in shadows or formed in the creases of billowing curtains. In fact, with its characters walking down ornate hallways (courtesy of production designer Eugenio Zanetti), the film starts to resemble one of Roger Corman's Poe adaptations. Unfortunately, this subtlety soon gives way to the expected effects extravaganza, and the film rapidly deteriorates.

Lili Taylor is an able replacement for Julie Harris as Eleanor, but Liam Neeson's scientist has been rewritten to his detriment (no longer a parapsychologist, he is now merely conducting an experiment into the effects of fear).

Owen Wilson's surfer dude is way out of place in Hill House, failing to fill the slot of Russ Tamblyn's character in the original, who effectively voiced the audience's skepticism while also providing a few laughs. Meanwhile, the suggested lesbianism of Clair Bloom's Theo (not a stated element of the source novel, by the way) has given way to an open bisexuality on the part of Catherine Zeta-Jones. However, the result is merely gratuitous, never generating any dramatic sparks, unlike the original, where it was one more wedge driving the characters apart and weakening their united front in the face of a supernatural assault.

In fact, one of the big problems is that, unlike the 1963 version (and unlike **BLAIR WITCH**), the film never generates any tension from the interaction of its characters; the story is frankly dull when the ghosts aren't attacking. Even worse, David Self's uninspired screenplay foolishly provides an explanation for the haunting, as if afraid the open-ended nature of the original will leave contemporary audiences confused. Maybe it wouldn't have been so bad if the explanation had been interesting, but the result feels frankly grafted on from another source: the evil, ghostly proprietor of the house; the innocent souls held in limbo against their will; and the young woman who dies trying to release these trapped spirits—these plot points suggest Richard Matheson's *Hell House* rather than Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*.

Of course, this isn't the first time that DreamWorks top-gun Steven Spielberg has lifted a page from Matheson's work: as executive producer, he recycled the author's classic **TWILIGHT ZONE** episode "Little Girl Lost" in **POLTERGEIST**. As in that earlier, overblown effects extravaganza, **THE HAUNTING** insists that malevolent supernatural forces are no match for family values. The frankly silly ending has Eleanor realizing that she is a descendent of Hill House's original owner destined to undo the evil he perpetrated. Poor Lili Taylor is left shouting at the CGI bogeyman, "This is about family," as if that were some kind of protective talisman.

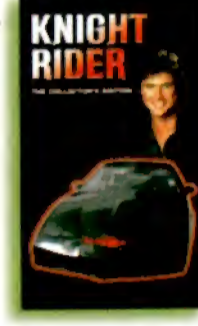
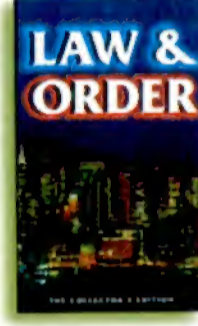
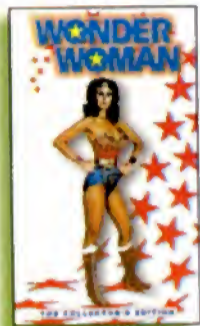
By the time she expires and her soul leads the dead children toward Heaven, we're left shaking our heads in dismay at the colossal miscalculation. Let's face it: Kenny's ascent into the divine realm at the end of **SOUTH PARK: BIGGER, LONGER, AND UNCUT** (Warners-Paramount, 6/99, 1:23, R) is a much more moving cinematic experience. Trey Parker and Matt Stone had the courage to be rude and crude in a way that was refreshingly brilliant and hilarious. Compromised by foolish rewriting of an excellent novel, **THE HAUNTING**'s brand of "respectable" PG-13 entertainment actually panders far more detrimentally to its intended audience than the foul-mouthed animated epic. □



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